





# THE MIXED SCHOOL

## A STUDY OF COEDUCATION

BY

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TO  
MY WIFE





“ . . . One of the most striking developments in day school education—hardly realised, I think, by those who are not in actual touch with it—has been the growth of the mixed (secondary) school. You will have noticed that the proportion of mixed schools to boys’ schools in the list set before you is almost exactly as 7 to 8, and the number of boys educated in them a little less than 2 to 5. . . . Clearly the origin of most of them, whether as new schools or as old schools remodelled, was due to convenience ; the interesting point about them is the growth of a belief in them on educational grounds, and the remarkable success of their work. . . .”

R. F. CHOLMELEY,

*President of the Incorporated Association of Head Masters, 1927.*



## P R E F A C E

SCHOOLS which admit both boys and girls have been common in England for years. Elementary schools of this type exist in large numbers ; there are over sixteen thousand of them, educating two-thirds of the total number of children in the country receiving elementary education. There are also many mixed secondary schools. Founded for a variety of reasons, both good and bad, these secondary schools have increased rapidly in numbers ; there are now over three hundred and fifty of them, and it has been calculated that two boys out of every seven receiving secondary education in England and Wales in 1926 received it in schools to which girls were also admitted. The mixed school, therefore, forms a substantial part of our national educational system. English writers on co-education, however, though they have discussed in detail the problems of various privately owned schools for boys and girls, have not devoted much attention to the work and problems of those schools which come within the State system. The most systematic account of such schools is that given by Mr G. F. Burness in

his *La coéducation dans les écoles secondaires*, but his book is written in French and was published in 1912, since which time there have been significant changes both in mixed schools and in schools of all types.

The reader may be entirely in favour of mixed schools. Or he may be sympathetic to their ideals, but yet feel that the practical difficulties they have to face are so great as to make them, on the whole, less likely to be successful than schools of other types. He may, again, have a vague, indefinable dislike of them, none the less persistent because he finds it difficult to express his feeling in words. Or he may even be one of that small group of persons which sees the mixed school as something which is sapping the foundations of our national greatness. It is possible to hold more than one opinion about mixed schools. But, whatever attitude the reader may adopt, he cannot ignore the fact that the mixed school is here, in our midst ; that it refuses to be ashamed of itself or to apologise for its existence ; and that neither in this generation nor in the next is there any possibility of getting rid of it even if we wanted to. And therefore it is to everyone's interest that the mixed school should be studied, and understood, and given freedom to develop along its own lines. For only so can it reach its maximum efficiency ; and it is a matter of national

concern that all types of school should be as efficient as possible.

The needs and problems of mixed schools, then, ought to receive the attention of all those interested in the development of education in England. Those schools are of special importance at a time when many educationists are looking forward to a raising of the school-leaving age and to the consequent provision of many more schools undertaking some form of post-primary education. They may need criticism. But before they can be criticised they must be understood; and it is a fact that, outside the circle of those people who are professionally interested in them, they are commonly not understood. All sorts of misconceptions are current regarding their methods, functions and ideals. Many members of the general public look on the mixed school as an inferior type which was founded, and can only be defended, for reasons of economy; and there are even many teachers who would be startled to know that Mr R. F. Cholmeley, for instance, has declared the successful mixed school to be one of the best types of school in existence. So that there seems room at the present moment for a short account of such schools written by someone who, without claiming to be an educational expert of any kind, has had teaching experience in both separated and mixed schools

and sees the problems of the mixed school from the inside.

I have to thank the following for permission to make use of one or two extracts from their own writings: Mr G. F. Burness; Messrs C. Grant and N. Hodgson, authors of *The Case for Coeducation*; and Miss Alice Woods, who edited *Advance in Coeducation*. Miss C. C. Graveson, M.A., Sir Benjamin Gott, M.A., Mr R. F. Cholmeley, C.B.E., M.A., Miss D. M. Shooter, B.Sc., and Mr K. St. C. Carruthers, M.A., have all very kindly read the manuscript of this book and made many helpful suggestions; and I am indebted in a special degree to Professor Cyril Burt, who has allowed me to draw freely upon his wide experience as a psychologist. Several heads of mixed schools, also, both men and women, have supplied me with valuable information about their own schools. But the book is not to be taken as reflecting the opinions of anyone but myself, nor should it be assumed that it describes the organisation, or embodies the experience, of any particular school. The book is the expression of my own views only, and no one else should be hanged for my sins.

B. A. H.

ADDEY AND STANHOPE SCHOOL, S.E.14.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE EVOLUTION OF COEDUCATION

A COEDUCATIONAL or "mixed" school is usually defined as a school which admits boys and girls on equal terms. Stated more fully, it is a school in which boys and girls are educated together, usually in the same classes, and are allowed some freedom of association both within and without school hours. It is not necessarily, or even usually, a school in which all differences between boys and girls are ignored, or in which the sexes follow identical courses of study. But it stands in sharp contrast to the "dual" school, where boys and girls use the same buildings, but in which their curricula are largely independent and the separation of the sexes is usually complete. The reader is asked to note the distinction with some care, since an infallible method of arousing the ire of a coeducationist is to ask him if he teaches in a dual school. It should be added that some schools are called "dual" which are in fact "mixed."

Occasionally a school which is organised predominantly in the interests of one sex receives

for special reasons a few members of the opposite sex. Thus a „girls' school will often contain a preparatory class to which young boys are admitted ; and boys' gymnasia in Germany at the present time sometimes admit a small number of older girls who need special tuition in certain subjects to enable them to proceed to a University. Neither class of school admits the sexes "on equal terms," and neither would be called "coeducational."

The underlying assumption of the coeducationist is that boys and girls have an equal right to education. But he does not assume, either that boys and girls are "equal," since the phrase is devoid of all meaning, or that they should have identical educations. In theory at any rate he would be more likely to assert that no two human beings should receive identical educations. In practice he recognises that the sexes have slightly different needs, and claims that he can make adequate provision for these differences within the organisation of the one school.

In one sense, coeducation can claim to be the most ancient of all systems of education, since education in the home is usually coeducation. But as a method of school education, it cannot claim a distinguished history. It has grown considerably in the last century, and in America it has always been the established method ;

but in earlier times there are only occasional glimpses of it to be obtained. Its supporters would like to think of it as having advanced with the majestic sweep of a conquering army ; but in point of fact, until recently, its advance has had much more of the fluctuating and spasmodic motion of a football scrimmage. It has been, in a word, sporadic. But that is a characteristic which it shares with many another educational ideal. New methods in education have frequently appeared, prospered, and have then been completely lost once more. There has been no means of spreading information about them. Scientific advance in education is, indeed, a modern phenomenon.

Glimpses of the joint education of boys and girls can be seen in classical times. In Sparta, where the position of woman was higher than in most communities of the time, the sexes were by no means entirely separated. One good authority asserts that the sexes sat side by side in the schools of Greece and Rome. The evidence is fragmentary. It is known, for example, that the educational endowments of Teos provided that the professors of literature should teach both boys and girls. There is a Roman tombstone extant which depicts a schoolmaster with a girl on one side of him and a boy on the other. And in the first century A.D. Musonius wrote in favour of coeducation. He

argued that the virtues required in boys and girls were alike—good sense, justice, self-control and courage. Both sexes needed to study the “art of living.” But he did not say that their educations should be identical ; girls might learn spinning while boys were exercised in gymnastics. A modern coeducationist, though choosing different options, would make the same point. On the whole, however, such coeducation as occurred in Roman times was probably confined to the country districts, and in spite of Musonius it seems to have been a matter of convenience merely. The grandeur that was Rome might have been increased if Rome had left us an official theory of coeducation. But the decline of Rome had begun before the schools were officially recognised at all ; and in any case the Romans as a race did not leave many theories about anything.

Boys and girls seem to have attended the monastery schools of the Greek church for some centuries ; but after that all trace of coeducation in schools has been lost for some hundreds of years. More than one reason may be adduced to account for this. The adverse influence of the priests was a powerful factor. To this day, in countries in which Roman Catholicism flourishes, coeducation has made comparatively little headway. The monastic schools of the Middle Ages were attended by boys alone ; the girl,

when educated outside the home at all, attended a nunnery school. And the girl was not the only loser by the separation. Perhaps her presence might have softened the unspeakable brutalities of the medieval schools, or the discipline of the schoolmaster who boasted that he had delivered over nine hundred thousand blows in the course of his career, and whose nightly petition was that the Lord would spare him until he had got the total into seven figures. Or perhaps she might only have enabled him to run to his points all the sooner. This is conjecture; the hard fact is that in the Middle Ages not only was the boy denied the company of his sister; it was often thought wise to separate him from female influence of any kind. "After that a childe is come to seuen years of age," wrote Sir Thomas Elyot, "I hold it expedient that he be taken from the company of women: sauynge that he may have one yere, or two at the most, an auncient and sad matrone, attendynge on him in his chambre, which shall nat have any yonge woman in her company . . . the most sure counsaile is, to withdraw him from all company of women, and to assigne unto him a tutor, which sholde be an auncient and worshipfull man."

But the fundamental reason why coeducation did not flourish is clear enough. It is simply that the education of girls has until recent times been more neglected than that of boys. No one

can approach the problem of educating boys and girls together if he does not believe in educating girls at all, or if he believes that they should be educated for totally different purposes. The amount of education given to girls has always depended on two factors: the general view of the position of woman, and the specific duties for which she was to be trained; and these two factors are of course themselves connected. For centuries the status of woman was low, and her life was the life of the home rather than that of the world. In such an atmosphere it would be idle to expect coeducation to flourish.

The early Humanists of the Renaissance had a higher view of the position of woman. Education for them in theory meant the development of personality—body, mind and spirit; in practice, they wanted literary accomplishments for both men and women. Erasmus stressed the importance of the education of girls; but for him, the home rather than the school was its centre. Girls, however, did begin to be admitted to Renaissance schools, especially the “home” schools of great families. Vittorino da Feltre, for example, had at least one girl pupil in his famous school at Mantua; but it is only by courtesy that this can be called coeducation.

No general advance in coeducation could be expected until there was some recognition of two needs; some education for all girls, and a

liberal education for some girls. The first of these needs was recognised by Luther, who to that extent may be called the father of modern coeducation in practice. Girls had immortal souls ; salvation was to be attained by reading the Bible ; therefore, girls should be taught to read. He did not give school coeducation a theory ; like Erasmus, he laid stress on the importance of home training ; but he helped to set it going in practice. For it was this Protestant influence which started primary schools in Germany, Scotland and the north of England ; and to these schools girls were often admitted. The movement, thus started, has grown steadily. To this day small village schools in all these countries are attended as a matter of course by boys and girls ; it is a question of convenience rather than of principle ; it is only in the towns that separation of the sexes in primary schools has become common.

A few statistics will illustrate how prevalent the mixed elementary school is in England and Wales. In 1926, according to the official figures issued by the Board of Education, there were 250 "senior mixed" elementary schools ; 1,615 "junior mixed," and 14,728 classified merely as "mixed." The numbers of separated schools for boys and girls, on the other hand, were 3,875 and 3,636 respectively. The mixed school thus largely predominates over other



types. Well over two million boys and girls are educated in these schools. If infants' schools were included in the above figures, they would become even more striking; the number of boys and girls educated together would then amount to over three millions. It is, therefore, hardly an exaggeration to say that the mixed elementary school is the normal English type, the separated the abnormal.

The second need, a liberal education for some girls, received no general recognition in England until the middle of the last century. It did not lead immediately to coeducation, but the development of coeducation cannot be understood without some reference to it. In the early part of the century the education of girls, even girls of good family, was practically confined to scripture, reading, writing, music and painting. It was called, grimly, the "education of accomplishments." By which was meant, no doubt, that in practice it fitted girls to accomplish very little. Boys' education, on the other hand, was more systematic; the grammar school course would often include, in addition to the classics, some amount of history, geography, mathematics and science. This at least may be said of it, that it was more pretentiously organised than the girls' course, and for some boys at least offered a thorough education. If you liked the classics, you were taught them with some

degree of thoroughness. And if you did not like them, you were taught them just the same:

Hence it was natural that the pioneers of higher education for women should have started by copying the boys' curriculum. Theirs was an astonishing movement ; in one short half-century it had astonishing results. It was led by women with ideals, with a boundless capacity for hard work, and, in general, with an excellent sense of tactics. The outstanding names connected with it are those of Miss Beale, at Cheltenham, Miss Buss, at the North London Collegiate School, and Miss Davies, the founder of Girton. The leaders of the women's movement have long since recognised that equality does not imply identity ; but the first step naturally was to want for girls the kind of education that boys had. Boys' schools were more efficient ; which was a sufficiently good reason for imitating them. And the pioneers wanted above all things to show that the girl was not necessarily inferior to the boy ; so that if the boy was taught to stand on his head, the girl must perforce be taught to do so too. The boy was not in fact taught any such thing ; but he was taught some things which were of traditional value merely, and which girls' schools might have gained by ignoring. Nowhere is this tendency to imitate the existing curriculum for boys brought out

more clearly than in the efforts which resulted in the foundation of Girton. It was suggested to Miss Davies (e.g. by Bryce) that she might aim at a college better than the men's colleges; with, for example, better examinations. But she ignored the suggestion; she was determined that women should be submitted to the *same* tests as men. And her tactics, of course, may have been right. The same tendency is traceable in the sphere of secondary education. In 1865 girls gained the right of entry to some of the public examinations taken by boys; no one was daring enough to suggest that their needs should influence the subjects or the syllabuses; it was for them to be fitted to the examination rather than for the examination to be fitted to them; and this served still further to influence the girls' curriculum in the direction of the boys'. Thus, while within the walls of the boys' school were taught Euclid and History and Geography and Latin, within the walls of the girls' school there came to be taught Latin and History and Geography and Euclid. But they were, in the days of Miss Beale, almost entirely separate worlds. No woman crossed the threshold of the boys' school; into the girls' school, save for the janitor and, perhaps, a few young boys<sup>n</sup> judged too small to do any serious harm<sup>n</sup>, no representative of the male sex was allowed to enter. Given the social customs of the Victorians, it is difficult to see

how it could have been otherwise. Boys and girls were "naturally," it was thought, kept apart. But whether the thoughts of the girls of the age were so entirely concentrated on the higher learning as to be completely indifferent to the existence of another sex is a matter which is not entirely certain. Perhaps the sex-appeal was all the stronger because it was denied expression. The old rhyme is well known :

Miss Buss and Miss Beale  
Cupid's darts do not feel.  
They are not like us—  
Miss Beale and Miss Buss !

It is certain that neither Miss Beale nor Miss Buss was an advocate of coeducation for older girls ; nevertheless the very success of their work brought it within the region of practicability.

Meanwhile, Pestalozzi, at the end of the eighteenth century, had given coeducation a theory. The humanists had stressed the home as the place of education ; Pestalozzi stressed the school, but he thought that the school should be modelled on the home and family. Perhaps he was the earliest coeducationist to combine theory and practice ; certainly he founded schools at Stanz and Burgdorf which may be called coeducational. And Mary Wollstonecraft had a vision of a national scheme of education in which the

association of the sexes was an essential factor. She wrote of "the bad habits which females acquire when they are shut up together"; she supposed that the same was probably true of males (it is); and she thought that "to improve both sexes they ought, not only in private families but in public schools, to be educated together." The Society of Friends, which has always given a high place in its counsels to women, began to found schools to which both boys and girls were admitted; Ackworth (which has always been dual), had been founded in 1779; Sidcot, founded in 1808, has now become one of the leading coeducational schools in the country. The Society founded some others in the first half of the nineteenth century; they were at first dual, but are now practically all coeducational. The change has been partly a matter of convenience, but is mainly due to the growing conviction that there are real gains to boys and girls arising from their education together. The conviction, however, is of quite recent date; a rigid separation was the rule for years. Genuinely coeducational schools came later; Mme Bodichon founded Portman Hall School, but though it was successful, it had, for private reasons, to be discontinued in 1864. Mr W. A. Case started one at Hampstead in 1865, Miss Lushington one near Alton in 1869, and Mr W. H. Herford started Ladybarn School, near Manchester, in

1873. Many other private schools, of varying value, have since been founded: "when they were good, they were very, very good, but when they were bad they were horrid." Two outstanding additions to the list of privately owned schools have been made within recent years; Bedales School, near Petersfield, founded in 1893, and St George's School at Harpenden, founded in 1907. These schools come within the rank of public schools, and their head masters (Mr J. H. Badley at Bedales and the Rev. Cecil Grant at St George's) have written two of the most detailed accounts and defences of coeducation which have appeared.

The work of some of these schools will always assure them a place in the history of coeducation. They have done something to remove the atmosphere of "crankiness" which gathers round any new idea—naturally enough, since in the early stages of any experiment extravagances are bound to occur. Sidcot, Bedales and St George's, for instance—all boarding schools—have exerted an influence out of all proportion to their numbers. They have shown that coeducational schools are able to do all the things that other schools do, and sometimes to do them very much better. Bedales, for example, sends on to the Honour Schools of the Universities a proportion of pupils that many public schools would envy; St George's will often beat schools

twice its size at cricket and football ; Sidcot produces examination results that are always good, and sometimes extraordinary. But three boarding schools, or thirty, only touch the fringe of the problem. While they are educating their thousands, the State through its elementary and secondary schools is educating its hundreds of thousands ; and in the last resort, it is in the State schools that the battle of coeducation will be lost or won. What had happened in the meantime to coeducation in the State schools ?

We have seen that the mixed elementary school had always been quite common. And we have also seen that the movement for the improvement of higher education for girls had resulted in a curriculum very similar to that followed by boys. The movement had been in no sense intended as an advance towards coeducation ; but it had made it almost inevitable that some measure of coeducation should sooner or later come into being.

It seems beyond dispute that coeducation captured some of the secondary schools almost without knowing what it was doing. Few of these schools attained coeducational status as the result of a conscious purpose. Like Topsy, they "just grewed."

Here is an area, for example, in which increased provision for higher education must be made ; boys and girls are now doing very similar work ;

let us erect one building, let both the sexes share it, and let a man rule over it. Thus did our administrators save a building, and a head's salary (this has always been a point with its appeal to administrators); thus, also, did they make coeducation possible within the walls of the secondary school.

The next stage is interesting. Little imagination is needed to see that when boys and girls, previously separated, are brought together in the same building, a new position, with fresh difficulties and possible dangers, is created. Much more imagination is needed to see that these dangers will be minimised by allowing the sexes to mix as freely as possible. Therefore at first a rigid separation was enforced between boys and girls. This was the day of the "dual" school. The organisation, in fact, consisted of two smaller schools under the control of one head. There might be, and there probably would be, a common assembly for the whole school; there might also be, though of course at different times in the day, the use of the same laboratory or art room. But communication in school between boys and girls was forbidden. Which often enough meant in practice that communication took place clandestinely, out of school, under conditions admirably adapted for causing the greatest possible amount of harm. Or perhaps the school regulations were actually obeyed



—in which case it was successfully instilled into the mind of the boy that all communication with a girl (not his sister) was sinful : which is not, perhaps, an altogether adequate preparation for citizenship of an Empire which will persist in producing as many daughters as sons. In fact, at the moment, rather more.

The separation of the men and women teachers, too, was usually complete. They had their separate staff rooms, and they were expected to keep to them. One case is on record of a woman teacher, in a dual school of some three hundred children, who taught for six months before she discovered the existence of one of the science masters of the school. It is said, too, that in one of these schools a master had occasion one day, in order to make some perfectly harmless enquiry, to enter the classroom of a woman colleague. She was so astounded at this breach of etiquette that she promptly rang a bell to summon the head master, who arrived in due course and led his erring colleague away. It is not clear whether it was the morals of the teacher, or the morale of the taught, which his promptitude of action preserved.

The Welsh Intermediate Education Act of 1889 was responsible for the foundation of a large number of these dual schools. A large part of Wales is thinly populated, and these schools effected considerable economy. But

under the Act managers had power to arrange that boys and girls should, if desirable, be taught together in any (or all) of the classes. And both in the Welsh schools and in other schools changes gradually came, dictated in the first place by reasons of convenience or economy. A teacher would be appointed with high qualifications in some particular subject ; it would seem better for him to take it on both sides of the school rather than to let him fill up his time teaching some other subject for which he was less suitable. The classes of boys and girls might remain separate ; nevertheless it contributed to a breaking down of the barriers. Or there would be two small divisions at the top of the school, one of boys and one of girls, working on the same syllabus ; they would be combined in order to effect economy ; and no very obvious deterioration in manners or in morals would be observed to follow. Finally there was the advance in public opinion of the status of women, with a corresponding lessening of the desire to afford girls a special protection ; and there was the growing evidence from genuinely coeducational schools that the sexes could, in fact, be allowed to mix with satisfactory results. All these factors contributed to the decline of the dual school and its gradual supersession by the mixed school. And in England there has been another important factor. One result of the Education Act of 1902

was that many higher-grade elementary schools were reorganised as secondary schools. Some of these schools had been mixed elementary schools, and grew in this manner into mixed secondary schools.

The decline in the dual school was inevitable. The mixed school, whether one agrees with it or not, is at least the expression of a definite educational theory ; it is hardly too much to say that it embodies a view of life. What that theory is will appear in later chapters of this book. But the dual school, on the other hand, was the expression of no particular doctrine—except, perhaps, the doctrine that you should not spend three pounds where two will do. It was a compromise ; it satisfied few people ; it had no real roots. Those who believe in coeducation say that it has all the possible dangers of the system with none of its advantages. Those who do not believe in coeducation would rather see it replaced by two entirely separate schools. And it is hard to see how any new dual school could now be founded except for motives of economy. It does not, of course, follow that those few which are now existing will be abandoned. They may continue in existence for two reasons : their buildings may be well adapted for the purposes of a dual school, but difficult to convert to the needs of a coeducational one ; and there may be a strong tradition amongst their old scholars

and their supporters which acts as a bulwark against change.

None the less, the dual school has played an essential part in the evolution of coeducation. Public opinion thirty years ago would have been strongly antagonistic to the mixed school for older children, and the existence of the dual school provided the necessary experience for the coeducational one and gave a gradual demonstration of its possibility.

This sketch of the evolution of the mixed school from the dual covers the cases, of course, of some only of the schools which are at present mixed. It would be possible to quote case after case of modern secondary schools which were deliberately founded because of a genuine belief in the value of coeducation. These were mainly of rather later date, and were able to profit by the experience of the earlier ones. One of the best instances to be seen is the chain of mixed secondary schools in Middlesex, established for the most part as the result of a deliberate policy.

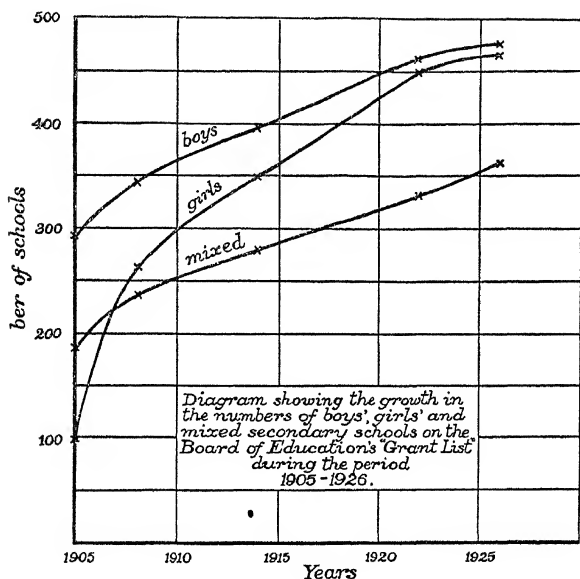
That many mixed schools, however, were originally founded on convenience rather than on conviction cannot be denied ; and this fact has sometimes given rise to misunderstanding. They have been thought to represent a form of education which is cheap, and therefore nasty ; they have been regarded as makeshifts, and it has been

thought that they would welcome their own conversion into single-sex schools if such a change were practicable. Nothing could be more profoundly untrue. However they may have come by it, these schools are, with few exceptions, proud of their coeducational status and would resist any attempt to rob them of it. What some of them adopted from motives of expediency they would most of them now defend on grounds of principle. They have tried coeducation ; and they have found that it works. It is a fact of capital importance that it is rare to meet a teacher who has had experience of both good coeducational and good separated schools who does not prefer the coeducational schools.

And it may be remarked in passing that, as a matter of fact, they are not "cheap." It is, of course, cheaper in initial outlay and in upkeep to build one mixed school for 400 pupils than two separated schools for 200 each. But a mixed school of 400 boys and girls is not cheaper than a boys' or girls' school of the same size ; it is usually slightly more expensive, though the difference in upkeep would dwindle to zero as the size of the school increased.

The fact is sometimes overlooked that the separate school can take no more pride in its ancestry than the mixed one. It, also, is the result of convenience. It has no real theory

behind it. It grew up in England because girls' education had been neglected, and the easiest way of supplying the deficiency was to build separate girls' schools; the boys' schools were



already there. The fundamental truth is that the abstract question of the advantages or disadvantages of coeducation has influenced only slightly the development of schools in England. The single-sex school and the mixed school are alike in this one respect, that in their inception

they neither expressed any educational principle. They just happened.

The growth in the number of English coeducational schools since the beginning of the century has been rapid. In 1905 there were 184 mixed schools on the Board of Education's "Grant List" of efficient secondary schools in England and Wales. In 1914 there were 281; in 1922 there were 331; and in 1926 the number was 361. Of this number, 234 were schools provided by county authorities; 70 were endowed schools; and 57 were Welsh intermediate schools. (See diagram, p. 35.)

Between them these schools educate, in England and Wales alone, about one hundred thousand boys and girls—approximately one-quarter of the total number of pupils receiving "efficient" secondary education. They are the nation's schools and they educate the nation's children; this fact alone gives their problems a wider significance than the problems of the independent coeducational school. Bedales, St George's and Sidcot, for instance, are recruited from a special class. They have done some of the most inspiring work in education which this century has seen; but they are not typical of the national problem.

Advance in the state-aided coeducational schools has, however, followed more sedate lines than in the independent ones. The Board of

Education has recognised them, and has framed one or two simple regulations which it has not been difficult to observe. But it is broadly true of any centralised authority to say that it has a tendency to preserve the norm rather than to sponsor experiments ; and the Board of Education can only be made enthusiastic about experiments if it can be convinced that they will be entirely safe. And a " safe " experiment is almost a contradiction in terms. Mr Bailey has suggested somewhere that the Board would only take tickets at an aerodrome on condition that there should be no accidents. The secondary schools have had, therefore, to keep a careful eye upon the Board of Education ; they have had, also, to keep another eye upon the County or Borough Council ; and, above all, they have had to remember that, for them, no permanent advance is possible in face of an unsympathetic public opinion. Messrs Grant and Hodgson once acidly referred to the parent who " having chosen a desirable residence, sends his children to the nearest teaching establishment " ; it was not in such schools, they hoped, that the real trial of coeducation would take place. But in hard fact, the vast bulk of the people of England do send their children to the nearest teaching establishment. They are obliged to. Primary schools are almost wholly recruited that way ; and except in the larger towns there is little real



freedom of choice for the parent who desires any form of post-primary education for his children. For these reasons, experiment in the state-aided schools has been hampered ; but there have been corresponding advantages. Change in such schools has had to be thought out with special care. A leap forward may be difficult ; but at any rate there is less danger of a leap in the dark.

This transformation which has come over one-quarter of the grant-earning secondary schools of England is one that invites the serious attention of all interested in our educational system. For the secondary schools are the crux of the whole problem.

In theory at least there is little serious opposition to coeducation at the primary stage of education. What opposition there is, is usually based on practical grounds. Sometimes the difficulties felt are professional, sometimes they are administrative ; but they rarely touch the theoretical case. Where objections are raised which appear to be based on the merits or demerits of the case, it is usually found that they are not so much directed against coeducation as against misconceptions or abuses of it. There is little serious opposition in principle, either, to coeducation at the University stage : though it is arguable that it can never be fully successful until the Universities are fed by coeducational schools.

Single-sex training colleges are still being built, but all the newer Universities are open to men and women upon equal terms. And if the coeducationists would agree to separate the sexes from the ages of 12 to 16 (which often means in practice from 11 to 18) there would be little real difference of opinion upon the abstract merits of the case. But that is precisely what the coeducationists cannot agree to do, since it is their contention that it is during the period of adolescence that the need for coeducation is most urgent and that its moral and intellectual advantages are most marked.

This book therefore will devote special attention to the problems of coeducation at the post-primary stage. It will examine first the moral and then the social reasons for which mixed schools are advocated, and it will then enquire how far a policy which may be desirable on such grounds is possible in practice. In other words, it will enquire whether there is any obstacle to coeducation arising from the nature of the subjects taught in schools, what are the differences, physical, intellectual and temperamental, between boys and girls, and whether these differences are a help or a hindrance to coeducation. Finally, it will give some account of how these differences are dealt with in the organisation of a mixed school.

## CHAPTER II

### COEDUCATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES

It remains to give a brief account of the development of coeducation, and its present position, in countries other than England. But it should be stated at once that it is alike unwise for English coeducationists to be too ready to draw favourable conclusions, or their opponents unfavourable, from the experience of other countries. The conditions often differ so radically from English conditions as to make comparison impossible. In Germany, for instance, the position of woman is widely different from her position in England. She is, above all, the *hausfrau* ; she takes little or no part in the national life. Hence the education of girls in Germany is in the main widely sundered from the education of boys ; and a system suitable for the one country might produce quite different results in the other. Again, American coeducational schools contain a very large preponderance of women teachers ; in English post-primary schools the numbers of men and women on the staff are roughly equal. Good or bad consequences may follow from the preponderance ; the present

point is that comparison must inevitably be made very difficult.

In America it is the single-sex school which is without a history. From the beginning, the district schools in the smaller settlements were open to both sexes. American civilisation was in a hurry ; it had no time to waste in duplicating schools. The sexes did not take equal advantage of their educational opportunities ; girls rarely advanced beyond the stage of reading and writing. But as the schools grew in number, and their scope widened, they continued to be coeducational. In the west this was perhaps a matter of convenience and economy. In the more thickly populated east it would have been possible, had there been any demand for it, to have established the single-sex school. But the mixed school was definitely preferred ; it was the embodiment of the American doctrine of equal educational opportunities for all. The official view of co-education in America is that it is impartial ; it gives the girl the same opportunities for advancement and culture as it gives the boy.

At the present day practically the entire system of State schools is coeducational. The extent to which this is true may be gauged from the fact that in 1922 there were only 79 public high schools in the whole of the United States attended exclusively by one sex. In the Western States, however, there is a considerable number

of private schools and colleges, often of high standing, which are organised for one sex only. Some few of these were certainly founded through dissatisfaction with coeducational schools, but the number so founded has been exaggerated. Several reasons quite unconnected with the merits or demerits of coeducation have increased the number of private schools. Well-to-do parents have objected not so much to the mixing of sexes as to the mixing of social classes, and, indeed, the mixing of races, in the public schools. They have, therefore, founded "exclusive" schools, and have taken as their model what must be admitted to be a good model for anyone desiring exclusiveness—the English public school. Again, with the growth of girls' education in the last century much more additional accommodation was needed in some towns for girls than for boys; the separate girls' school was a convenient method of supplying it. And lastly, the growth of certain kinds of vocational training in America has resulted in some cases in sharply divergent curricula for the sexes, and a measure of segregation has consequently followed.

In 1924 the numbers of private high schools in America were as follows: boys', 403; girls', 739; mixed, 982. Broadly speaking, however, it remains true that, so far as school education is concerned, America is predominantly coeducational. But it is becoming increasingly common

for boys and girls to choose different optional subjects, and in this way a certain amount of separation arranges itself naturally enough.

Some English observers have been impressed by the success of the American system, others have been the reverse of impressed. Probably all would agree that America is a land of extraordinary contrasts, and might win the prize for the world's worst school as easily as the prize for the world's best one. Writing before the war, Miss Woods said that "in some ways . . . American women are more feminine than the modern type of English women," and two other English observers have noted "a complete absence of sex-strain" and "an intellectual stimulus due to the intellectual differences between boys and girls." On the other hand, recent critics have reported a lack of discipline and self-control on the part of both boys and girls, though this is a charge which is made periodically against the younger generation in all countries.

Coeducation in America has been attacked, by English critics, on the ground that the divorce rate in America is alarmingly high. Obviously the existence of a high divorce rate makes it impossible to say that coeducation by itself, as practised in America, makes for married felicity. It cannot be maintained (though so far as the writer knows it never has been maintained) that the mere mixing of boys and girls during

adolescence will result automatically in ideal relationships later in life. But it is equally impossible to argue that the statistics show that happy married life is less common in America than in England. For there is no basis of comparison. The divorce laws are different. In England divorce is expensive and difficult; in America it is cheap and easy. In any case education is only one of many factors which affect the divorce rate. The conclusion is that only the rash will draw any conclusion at all.

Apart from the question of divorce, however, it is almost impossible to make effective comparisons between the two countries. The educational system in America cannot be separated from the history of the country and from its ideals. Features of life in America which appear to be due to coeducation may really be traceable to the conditions of family life, which are dissimilar from English conditions. And, as has been already mentioned, the actual work of teaching in America is largely in the hands of women. Seventy per cent. of the teachers in the State schools are women. It is not true that the man has been "ousted" by the woman; he has left the profession of his own accord. He has followed the lure of the almighty dollar; and in no country have those whose chief aim is the acquisition of money been attracted to the teaching profession. He has abandoned teaching

because other careers have attracted him more. The truth of this is attested by all observers ; and if further confirmation of it is needed, it may perhaps be found in the fact that whenever a teaching post has been specially lucrative, the man has usually managed to retain it. So that in America we have the curious paradox that while the personnel of the teaching profession is mainly composed of women, the great majority of the principals of schools are men. So much is this so, that men are often found as the heads of what are purely girls' schools. One school in New York, for instance, of 5,000 girls, has a male principal.

There is no doubt that these facts create an unfortunate impression on the minds of English teachers. For to the Englishman it appears as though coeducation lessens the need for male teachers, and to the Englishwoman it appears as though under a coeducational system women are rarely appointed to posts of much responsibility.

Supporters of coeducation in England, however, are at one in thinking that these results are neither inevitable nor desirable. For the English theory has maintained that both men and women are needed to train boys and girls for citizenship in a community which contains both men and women ; and the English coeducationist would object as strongly to a staff composed wholly



or mainly of women as he would to a staff composed wholly or mainly of men. Hence coeducation in England, so far as it has a definite policy at all, aims at a balance of men and women teachers. Even if the girls should happen in any school largely to outnumber the boys, or vice versa, it would still seem to follow from the English theory that the numbers of men and women on the staff should be kept approximately equal, so that each boy, and each girl, should have the benefit of contact with both men and women teachers. Many coeducationists, indeed, would follow the argument to its logical conclusion, and would advocate a mixed staff even for a boys' school or a girls' school. If, therefore, there should eventually be a lack of balance in the English schools between the numbers of teachers of the two sexes, it will not be due to coeducation, but to a perversion of it.<sup>1</sup>

The official system of schools in Canada resembles the American system in being coeducational. Not only are the primary schools mixed; boys and girls sit side by side in the high schools right up to the ages of 18 or 19. Whether the Canadian has become effeminate in consequence is a matter on which the reader must form his own opinion. It should be added that, as in America, there is a number of private schools organised for one sex only.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 202.

We have already seen that many primary schools of Scotland can be traced back to Protestant influence at the time of the Reformation, and that girls as well as boys attended them from the beginning. To this day they have remained coeducational.

Post-primary education in Scotland grew by slow stages out of primary ; it was given in the same schools, and a type of school known as a higher-grade school thus arose. These schools came in time to give what amounted to secondary education ; separate buildings were thus avoided ; and the schools being only a slow growth from the primary schools naturally retained their coeducational status. This was one only of several factors in the growth of coeducation in England ; it has been the most important factor in Scotland. The plan was natural, convenient and economical ; and to this day the higher-grade schools continue to form an essential part of the national organisation of education. Secondary schools are for the most part only found in the more populated districts ; many of them are separated, but many even of these are coeducational. Roughly speaking, boys' schools, girls' schools and mixed schools are about in equal proportions. Thus coeducation is universal in the elementary school and the more usual form in higher education.

It is perhaps to Scotland rather than to

America that English enquirers in search of a parallel might look, since the conditions there are more nearly similar to English conditions. Coeducation has taken root very naturally and easily north of the border. On the whole Scotland has shown an imperturbable refusal to recognise that there is any problem to discuss. And perhaps it is right. Perhaps the mixed school stands in no need of a theory. Perhaps it is the separated school which requires one.

Those who see any significance in divorce rates may be interested to know that in Scotland the rate at present is lower than in England.

In France, Italy and the Roman Catholic countries of Europe generally, there is little coeducation except at the primary stage ; though in Italy there is more than in France. And even at the primary stage, coeducation is not favoured. In France, for example, it is allowed in areas in which there are few pupils, and in which the alternative would be two very small and therefore inefficiently organised institutions. But there is no liking for it, and when an occasional mixed school is organised without this justification, there is usually someone found to object to it. Which is perhaps just as well ; since a wholesale and indiscriminate "mixing," even of primary schools, under teachers who are not in sympathy with the ideals of coeducation and are trained

to regard it as a "second-best," is not likely to produce results of much value.

The State system in Spain is, broadly speaking, a coeducational one. But it is coeducational by accident rather than by design. The system has grown out of a system of boys' schools, to which girls were gradually admitted as the movement for the education of girls advanced. A few elementary schools in the big towns are the only trace of the official single-sex school in the country. The private schools are mainly separate—but then they are almost all in the hands of the Church.

In the Protestant countries coeducation is found much more frequently. The Swiss schools are partly coeducational, partly dual, and partly single-sex ; many Dutch schools are also coeducational.

Special reference should be made to the position in Germany, which has altered a good deal since the war. Mixed schools at the primary stage have been, and are, quite common. They educate boys and girls together up to the age of 14 years very much as they are educated in England. But in Germany there has never been a Woman's Movement on anything approaching the same scale as in England, and comparatively little provision has been made for the higher education of girls. It was only the exceptional girl who would become anything

more than the housewife, and who, therefore (it was thought), required a liberal education. Such girls were commonly admitted, in small numbers, to the boys' gymnasia. They attended in order to obtain the tuition (usually in Latin, Greek and Mathematics) necessary for the University entrance examination. They joined the boys' classes, but took little or no part in the social life of the school. The general experience of them seems to have been that, on the whole, they did as well as, and often better than, the boys. But there is no significance in this fact, since they were obviously a small number of selected girls whose intelligence might have been expected to have been above the average. Where the number of girls requiring a secondary education is small, this still remains a common practice ; but where a large number has to be dealt with, a separate school is usually built. In any case, there is little in the system as described to justify the name of coeducation.

Real coeducation during the adolescent years is as yet unpopular in Germany. It is chiefly in the democratic areas, which are more open to new ideas, that it is to be found. It has made some progress since the war in certain centres such as Berlin, Hamburg and Saxony ; in Hamburg alone three mixed secondary schools have been built since 1920. In such centres it is practised in varying degrees. In some schools

classes are mixed for almost all subjects throughout the school ; in others boys and girls are taught separately up to the age of 16 years, after which, as the classes tend to become smaller, they are mixed, as a matter of administrative convenience. English coeducation once passed through this latter stage, but many English supporters of coeducation would now feel that if the sexes have been kept apart until the age of 16 years, special difficulties are involved in an attempt to bring them together then. In one school mixed and separate classes both form part of the organisation, the parent choosing the class he desires his child to attend. The mixed classes seem less popular, but no special difficulties have arisen in them.

An incident has occurred in connection with one school which may be recorded, since it may not be without its moral for coeducationists. A boy and girl in the highest class formed an attachment, ran away from school together, and committed suicide. It is, of course, an isolated case ; and as such has no significance whatever. The case for coeducation is not likely to be upset because, out of all the hundreds and thousands—indeed millions—of boys and girls who have been educated together in many countries in the last generation, two unbalanced people have taken their lives. Similar isolated tragedies have been known occasionally in schools

of other types—one, indeed, has occurred in Germany recently among the pupils of two single-sex schools. But although there is no logical conclusion to be drawn, the psychological effect in the immediate neighbourhood has been considerable. The case has created prejudice and is often quoted as an argument against mixed schools ; and it has given a real, though no doubt only temporary, setback to coeducation in that particular area.

The opinion of teachers in Germany is, in general, unfavourable to coeducation at the secondary stage ; which is only natural, since so few of them have any direct experience of it. The younger women teachers are more favourably disposed to it than the men. The root objection is, of course, that the girl does not need so systematic and thorough an education for her more restricted life as the boy needs for his fuller one. But certain specific difficulties are also felt. How can biology, it is asked, be taught in a mixed class ? How can literature, so far as it deals with moral problems, be taught to the sexes at the same time ? And has not a boy more natural aptitude for mathematics and physics, and will not the girl be a handicap to him in such studies ? These difficulties have been met by the more successful of the mixed schools, and the German believers in coeducation are now urging its claims on very much the same

grounds as the English ones, though with less emphasis than English coeducationists have placed on its advantages from the point of view of pedagogics alone. Germans make a sharp distinction between coeducation and coinstruction, and some who are willing for boys and girls to share the same school and to meet on equal terms think that it is more effective to teach the sexes separately.

It should be added that evening high schools are now being established in Germany to provide a course for adults who may wish to carry their education on to University standard; and to these evening classes both sexes are admitted.

It is a rough, but not unfair, summary of the position of coeducation in Germany to-day to say that it seems to be developing along very similar lines to English coeducation, but to be forty or fifty years behind it in development.

Denmark is almost entirely a coeducational country. The movement started with some successful private schools and penetrated the national schools later. Coeducation is not merely permitted; it is obligatory in the majority of schools.

In the Scandinavian countries the mixed school is a normal feature. Once more, the way was prepared for coeducation in the State schools by the experience of some very successful pioneer schools under private management. One such



school was started at Stockholm as far back as 1876, a similar one in Finland, at Helsingfors, in 1880. In Norway, a thinly populated country, the law introduced coeducation into the State schools (of all grades) as early as 1896 ; it has remained the accepted system ever since.

Special reference should be made to the position of coeducation in Sweden, since the national system of education is now in process of reorganisation and the advantages and disadvantages of the mixed school have been the subject of special enquiry during the last ten years. Coeducation in the primary schools has been general. Post-primary schools within the State system have so far been of the following types : the " middle " or " central " schools, almost all of which are mixed ; high schools for boys alone ; and " modern " schools, of which nearly half are mixed, the remainder being for boys alone. The middle school is an offshoot of the primary one. Perhaps its nearest English equivalent is the old higher-grade school ; it is, however, in effect a secondary school. The high school roughly corresponds to the first-grade English secondary school, with a leaving age of 18 ; the modern school to the secondary school with a leaving age of 16. The latest official statistics relative to these schools were published in 1922 ; for Sweden also has had its economy campaign, and one of the first things

it sacrificed, English teachers will be interested to know, was the publication of its annual volume of educational statistics. According to official records, in 1922 there were 38 high schools for boys; 21 modern schools for boys; 18 mixed modern schools; and 71 middle schools. It may be noted that although the girls in the middle schools very slightly outnumbered the boys, 450 men teachers were employed as compared with 335 women teachers; so that the experience of Sweden has not so far supported the frequent allegation that the inevitable tendency in a coeducational country is for the man teacher to be superseded by the woman.

The obvious defect of the State system of education is the lack of facilities for the higher education of girls. The deficiency is made good by a very large number of private girls' schools. In 1922 there were 84 of these. Of private schools, beyond the primary stage, there were also 8 boys' schools and 20 mixed ones.

The chief change which has already taken place since 1922 is that the number of middle schools has been increased; in 1927 there were 87 of these.

The reform movement in Sweden has naturally concentrated upon the extension of the facilities for girls' secondary education, though it has also aimed at making the system more completely democratic than hitherto. The most important

practical problem before it was to determine its attitude towards coeducation, and a Commission appointed in 1919 had the work and aims of the mixed schools under special review. It took a large amount of evidence on the subject, including evidence from teachers in such schools ; and it noted that the opinion of the teachers with practical experience of coeducation was overwhelmingly in its favour. The few adverse opinions expressed centred chiefly on the danger of overstraining the girls.

The Commission issued its Report in 1923. Its view of the mixed school was favourable. Provided that due provision was made in the organisation of such schools for a course in Hygiene for girls, and provided also that there was sufficient differentiation of curricula to allow for the slightly varying aims of the sexes, it thought that the mixed school was a good type of school ; and it approved of it from the points of view of pedagogy and of education in its wider sense.

Owing to the economic situation, immediate effect could not be given to the recommendations of the Commission ; but in 1927 Parliament adopted most of its findings. The only essential difference is that one or two more single-sex schools are to be established in the larger towns than the Commission originally contemplated.

The reorganisation sanctioned by the legislature may be summarised as follows. Twenty-six high schools (hitherto for boys alone) are to be reorganised as mixed high schools. Ten more are to admit girls in the highest classes ; this is a temporary measure pending the establishment of more girls' schools. Four high schools for girls are to be founded in the immediate future. In certain areas where the boys' schools are already full this seems the simplest method of meeting the demand for more facilities for girls. Nine only of the high schools will remain for boys alone. Fifty-four middle schools are to be reorganised as modern schools and will retain their coeducational status. Besides these, there will be 27 modern mixed schools. Five only of the modern schools will continue as schools for boys alone. The private girls' schools which remain are gradually to be brought under the State system. It is clear that with the increase in the number of mixed secondary schools the need for these private girls' schools will diminish ; a few indeed have already been closed.

Coeducation is thus largely on the increase in Sweden. Its claims have been subjected to a long and critical examination, both by the Commission, in the country itself, and finally in Parliament ; and the result has been greatly to widen its scope.

As already stated, it is difficult to draw any confident conclusions from the experience of other countries. It is clear, of course, that no very drastic evils have followed the introduction of coeducation. Girls have not collapsed under the strain of keeping pace with the masculine intellect ; boys have not lost their virility ; the sexes have not indulged in promiscuous love-making. But all these conclusions could have been deduced equally well from the experience of the English coeducational schools. On the other hand, the mixed school, as organised for example in America, has not established itself as so clearly superior to other types that everyone wishes to keep it at all costs. There may be special reasons for this. But the final argument for coeducation in England is not anything which has happened, or not happened, in America or Canada or Sweden or even Scotland ; it is what is happening at the present moment in the mixed schools of England itself.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MORAL QUESTION

ONE of the reasons which sometimes decide a parent not to send his son or daughter to a coeducational school is his fear of the moral problem ; will it be " safe " ? He does not, of course, fear the grosser forms of immorality, but he has an uneasy feeling that to educate a girl with boys, or a boy with girls, is to invite a series of emotional disturbances which he would rather avoid. He fears that attention will be distracted by a " sex-lure " ; but it is precisely in the mixed school, the coeducationist would tell him, that sex-lure can be most effectively counteracted. The parent wants to solve the moral problem : he will never solve it until he faces it.

There is some little irony in this position, since a number of coeducational schools were deliberately founded in order to combat, if possible, the low standard of sex-morality in boys' boarding schools. Their advocates were not content to argue that mixed schools would be morally " safe " ; they asserted that they were safer than separated schools could possibly be.

The argument of the coeducationist is, that to segregate large numbers of either sex, to cut them off from the society of the other, is not a natural proceeding, and imposes a high degree of strain upon them. Under that strain their code of morals will sometimes collapse, and immorality, in one form or another, will result. The immorality may take various forms—impurity of thought, indecent language, masturbation, or something worse. And it is claimed that the presence of girls in a boys' boarding school purifies the atmosphere, that the mixing of the sexes produces an atmosphere as definitely unfavourable to immorality as the atmosphere of the separated school is favourable to it.

The claim is supported by the experience of many who have had opportunities of judging. But the argument on which the claim is usually based is not altogether satisfactory, since it turns on the use of the word "natural," and that is a word of which it is well to be suspicious. As commonly used, it means little and proves nothing. It has much to answer for; there are some who think that segregation is natural. Readers of *The Lanchester Tradition* will remember that even Lady Bellingham, the apostle of Education According to Nature, was not quite sure what she meant by the word :

"Nature is always beautiful, and in educating the young we must trust more to Nature and less

to artificial restrictions. We must not interfere with a beneficent purpose, and Nature's purposes are always beneficent. Nursed on the great bosom of Nature, beautiful children will grow up into beautiful men and women."

When Lady Bellingham had finished Mr Bent, assuming his most impressive and deferential manner, asked if he might put a question.

"Certainly," replied Lady Bellingham affably.

"I do not press," said Mr Bent, "for any definition of what you call beautiful things, because that might introduce the personal element. But when you urge that we should impose no restrictions upon Nature, I foresee difficulties. Measles, for example, are a form of Nature, and of course you would not wish us to impose no restrictions upon measles."

"Of course not," said Lady Bellingham, with amused pity.

"Then might I ask," said Mr Bent, "what exactly we are to understand by Nature?"

"Nature," said Lady Bellingham, "is impossible to define. It is too vast, too varied. But, roughly speaking, whatever is beautiful is natural, and whatever is ugly is unnatural."

"I see," said Mr Bent.

The difficulty about accepting the coeducationist's argument is that the word "natural" invites biological comparisons; and biological analogies are always dangerous and often false. For man is not merely an animal; he is a body-soul. If he has an animal ancestry, he can claim also a spiritual evolution. If he has his feet



in the mud, he has also his head in the stars. He may "revert"; it is unfair to assume that he will necessarily revert. Because sexual perversities commonly occur, as they do, when large groups of male or female animals are segregated for any length of time, it does not follow that they necessarily occur in the human species. In any case, civilisation itself is "unnatural"; it is a highly artificial and complex product, and a "natural" education for it may be impossible: though to this the coeducationist may reply that there is no need to make life more unnatural than it already is. But when he speaks of coeducation being natural, he is really using the word in the Pestalozzian sense of being "like the family." And if his argument is inconclusive, his facts at least are fairly clear. It is, after all, unnecessary to infer when one may observe.

It is in the boarding school that segregation can be studied in its extreme form. Attack after attack has been made on the moral standards of the boarding school. A novel by an ex-public school boy, painting its impurity in lurid colours, achieved some amount of notoriety a few years ago. It focused public attention on certain facts which had been perfectly well known to schoolmasters for years. Those who know the system from the inside need no such book to convince them; and outsiders

cannot fairly judge a system because it is attacked in novels, which do not profess to be scientific treatises. It has been pointed out, however, that more significant than the novel was the reception accorded to it—the matter-of-fact comments passed upon it by those who had been insiders and should know. No one who has listened to the brutally frank conversation of undergraduates round a study fire will have any difficulty, even after making due allowance for the fact that undergraduates do not usually speak upon their oaths, in arriving at fairly definite conclusions. There is no real attempt to conceal the facts; even responsible schoolmasters, sympathetic to the system and writing from the inside, have given to the world novels which show “how very vile, under its deceptive lightheartedness, life can be in a bad house in a bad school.” The most curious defence, if it can be called a defence, came recently from the pen of no less a person than Professor Findlay. He warned his readers of the danger of exaggerating “public school immorality,” and gravely said that he himself could bear witness that “a substantial minority” of boys passed through the public schools unscathed. A substantial minority! One imagines that the supporters of such schools must have said about Professor Findlay what an English monarch once said about his army: “I don’t know what effect

these troops will have upon the enemy, but, by G——, they frighten me !” And yet Professor Findlay has said all that it is possible for one man to say.

It is as unnecessary as it would be unfair to take as proved all the charges made against single-sex boarding schools. But even their advocates do not suggest that all these charges are untrue. The charges stress a tendency which is inherent in the situation ; they point to a danger which cannot always, in spite of the utmost care, be avoided. It is notorious that a high moral standard is difficult to secure in barrack life ; it would be strange if trouble of some kind did not arise in the isolated school. It does, of course ; in varying degrees in different schools. And it has never been seriously contested, by anyone acquainted with the facts, that the coeducational boarding school has effected a great improvement in this respect.

The argument loses something of its force when applied to the case of the day school, where the isolation is less extreme ; and the attack, if made at all, must be continued on a lower plane. It can hardly be substantiated on the plane of vice. But, leaving on one side for the present all questions of the social and intellectual advantages of coeducation, it still remains true, for reasons which follow, that the

mixed day school is likely to be safer, on moral grounds, than the separated one. And in any case the separated day school contrasts favourably with the boarding school, not through any merit of its own, but because it leaves part of the work to be done by the home, which may or may not be able to do it. The day school is thus morally superior to the boarding school simply because it is possible to get out of it more frequently ; the boy or girl is not at school long enough for much harm to be done. It does not seem a very satisfactory doctrine of the function of a school.

But the question will still be asked, even by a parent who believes in coeducation at an earlier or a later age, whether it is fair to introduce an extra complication into the life of a boy or girl at the age of adolescence ; would it not be simpler to postpone it ? Of course it would. If human beings were of one race, one language, one sex, life might be simplified enormously. But the human race does not happen to be homogeneous. And in the same way the incidence of sex-problems cannot be postponed. It can be ignored ; but one cannot postpone by ignoring. It is not the coeducationist who introduces the complication. It is Nature. Nature has put the age of puberty in the middle of the child's school career, and we have to meet the position as it is.

Teachers in all types of schools are aware of the special dangers of the age, and they try to meet them as far as they can by directing the growing impulses and energies of the adolescent into other and more fruitful channels than those of sex. This is what head masters of boys' schools mean when they say that "hard work" is specially good for the boy at this age. They try to leave him no spare time in which he can think about or analyse the impulses and thoughts which come flooding into his mind. Or, rather, they try to help him to "work off" his feelings in these ways. But they are only partially successful. Nature is a little too strong even for head masters. You may drive her out with a pitchfork, but she will return. The coeducationist believes that it is a better plan to co-operate with Nature instead of trying to thwart or sidetrack her. And if the boy's thoughts cannot be diverted, it is dangerous to attempt to suppress them. Suppression may form complexes which do grave injury, all the graver in that their existence may not be suspected until the bad effects become apparent later in life. So that the real problem for the parent is not "How can I protect my son from the disturbing influence of girls?" or "How can I protect my daughter from the disturbing influence of boys?" but "How can I find her, wisely and safely, that companionship with boys which she

needs for her normal and harmonious development?" He is helped greatly, of course, if the girl gets the benefit of the company of both sexes at home; but he is helped still more if he sends her to a coeducational school where she will meet boys in the normal course of things and on equal terms, where she will work with them as well as talk to them, and where the supervision and guidance which the school will provide will give him some guarantee that the girl will be able to make her adjustments under safe conditions.

The truth is that so far from bringing a disturbing factor into the girl's life he is bringing a stabilising one. For it is essential to understand that the coeducational school does not place its emphasis upon sex. Its most striking feature is its almost entire absence of sex-consciousness. It is not thinking about sex. It is thinking about games; about the Debating Society; the School Journey; the magazine the Form is editing; the Play the Dramatic Society is producing; Brown's new excuse for not doing his History homework; what Miss Robinson will say when she finds that button in the hospital box; all the tremendous trifles of the school routine. Later, literature and history and politics and careers all come into its thoughts; and in the Sixth it is discussing all those problems of school management which are becoming so

pressing for the prefects. The one thing about which the school is not thinking is the darker side of sex. It has something better to think about. "It's not easy to keep one's mind on a man when one's heart's in one's jelly," as the housewife said. For, by admitting boys and girls once for all, taking them for granted, and unkindly robbing each of the glamour of the half-light and the delicately whispered confidence (boys and girls in a mixed school do not whisper delicately to each other), the coeducational school has helped them to dismiss the whole subject of sex. It will recur all right, later on ! But for the time it loses its appeal ; the attractive unknown has become the known, and turns out to be not so very attractive after all ; let us pass by . . .

It is sometimes difficult for an outsider to realise the full extent of this freedom from sex-feeling. Books about coeducation are obliged to mention sex on every page ; adults discuss earnestly the sex-problems involved ; but these problems exist in the minds of the adults rather than in the minds of the children. Dr J. A. Nairn, the late head master of a well-known boys' school, has complained in a recent article that sex seems to be the one subject of conversation between young people to-day, and adds that

sex, which should be the background of life, as natural and unobtrusive as the air we breathe,

is made self-conscious until it becomes an obsession. . . . No decent sex-morality is possible to a generation brought up to the self-conscious and insistent contemplation of sex in all its bearings.

With his last sentence all coeducationists will cordially agree ; but they will add that, if sex is really " the one subject of conversation between young people to-day," then the separated school does not seem to have been quite as successful in dealing with the matter as it might have been.

Wherever else sex-strain is to be found, it will not be found within the walls of the ordinary mixed school. For the atmosphere of such schools closely resembles that of the home. This characteristic of coeducational schools has been noted again and again by outside observers. Messrs Grant and Hodgson, after quoting Dr Gray's remark that in the coeducational schools of America there is " an absolute absence (I might well add disappearance) of sexual strain," go on to say :

For it is a feature noted not merely by those who work in coeducational schools, but particularly by visitors and observers from outside, that coeducation brings about a natural and healthy relationship between boys and girls and creates an atmosphere of free and easy intercourse which is an ideal environment for adolescent life.



As a footnote to this, the writer can recall the case of a mixed secondary school in England which was visited recently by three observers in one week. One was a University examiner (a man), another a lecturer in a training college (a woman), and the third the head mistress of an elementary school for girls. All three volunteered the information that what had specially struck them about the school was its atmosphere of pleasant friendliness. And that is true of most mixed schools; they are places where, however much pedagogues may try to introduce an element of sternness, "cheerfulness *will* keep breaking in."

What really happens when boys and girls who have previously been separated enter a mixed school? There is first some shyness and strangeness; a period of "getting used" to the new school. That lasts about a week. And then follows a little unsettlement and excitement, connected with the presence of members of the opposite sex. That lasts about a fortnight. And then it is finished. The whole effect is that of a successful inoculation.

The first result of mixing boys and girls, then, is to remove glamour and to cause them not to bother about each other. When the boy is denied an opportunity of speaking to the girl, when he catches odd glimpses of her or perhaps exchanges a few surreptitious words or notes,

to him she appears a golden-haired goddess; when he meets her on level terms in school the glamour vanishes. He may even cease to be interested in her at all; or he may set the seal of his approval upon her by regarding her as "a jolly good sort"; but it is, after all, a little difficult to fall in love with a girl who is willing to give you a friendly hand with your algebra. . . .

Even if the matter ended there, very considerable good would have been done; enough, in fact, to remove the fears of the over-anxious parent. But this first stage, of separation or indifference, is normally a transition stage to something better; very real and positive gains come to both boys and girls as they grow up together in the same school. They are able to work out a better and more enduring relationship than would otherwise be possible. The atmosphere, free from sexual embarrassments, becomes one in which each can contribute freely to the development of the other. They discover slowly (what many adults have yet to discover) that comradeship is possible between members of opposite sexes on a healthy and unsentimental basis; they develop a capacity for intelligent friendship; and they find out that friendliness can exist without familiarity, that boys and girls can help each other without wanting to "flirt" together. Familiarity in the wrong sense is

rare ; “ the girl feels instinctively that there is dignity in her position, and acquires quite naturally a measure of reserve and restraint which is of the utmost value in tiding over a period which is apt to be unstable and unduly emotional.”<sup>1</sup>

They learn, also, both the value and the art of co-operation, of which more must be said later ; and, most important of all, the girl comes gradually to a higher ideal of manhood, the boy to a higher ideal of womanhood. That these ideals are rarely as high as they might be, no one knows better than the coeducationist. But there is nevertheless an instinctive though unconscious desire on the part of each sex to be at its best in the presence of the other ; and it is not difficult, in any case, for them to have a higher ideal than obtains in a separated school ; for the view of woman in a segregated community of boys, or of man in a segregated community of girls, is notoriously low. All isolated communities tend to have a low view of those beyond their frontiers—“ the lesser breeds without the Law.” Moreover, the boy and the girl will have ideals of which this at least can be said, that they are founded on knowledge ; whereas an ideal founded on ignorance is not really an ideal at all, but (at best) a piece of hopeless sentimentality.

<sup>1</sup> Miss D. K. Horne in *Advance in Coeducation*.

The cynics may assert that platonic friendship between boys and girls is impossible ; and indeed it is very difficult to achieve between boys and girls who have been educated apart. But in a mixed school it is not only theoretically possible ; it is an observed fact. To suggest, however, what friendship between boys and girls might be, and in fact often is, is not to say that all boys and girls experience such friendships to the full. They do not ; and in any case the more usual friendship, even in a mixed school, is between boy and boy, or girl and girl. But the point is that the mixed school helps by creating the conditions under which a right relationship between boys and girls is possible ; it does not follow that it is always achieved. In any coeducational school, however good, the platonic friendship goes astray sometimes. Mild flirtations, what are called boy and girl love-affairs, do occur. They are usually known to members of the staff ; they may require very careful and tactful handling. Downright suppression is rarely of the slightest use. Sometimes a word in season may help ; more often it is wisest to let affairs take their course. The common sense of the school discourages them ; sooner or later, and usually sooner, they wither and die. The tone of the school is of incalculable value here. The flirting couple are spoiling a good thing ; they are making decent friendship impossible. Public

opinion does not think them immoral, but it does most emphatically think them stupid ; and it is rarely afraid to say so. In any case, the wholesome unsentimentality of the boy creates an atmosphere in which they receive the scantiest of encouragement. It may be said with considerable confidence that there are fewer cases of juvenile heart-affairs in a mixed school than in any other kind.

Coeducationists, then, claim that actual experience with mixed schools shows :

(1) That coarseness of language among boys is rarely if ever met ;

(2) That there is practically no sex-tension ;

(3) That there are fewer cases of flirtations among pupils of such schools than elsewhere ; and that these are generally short-lived, and less likely to do harm, because they are known ;

(4) That sexual trouble of a seriously unhealthy nature is unknown ;

(5) That sensible co-operation and unsentimental friendships between boys and girls are possible, to the great advantage of both sexes ;

(6) That each sex gains an added dignity in the eyes of the other.

It is easy to make light of these claims. They commonly are made light of by those with no experience of mixed schools. But it is

significant that these claims are supported by the large majority of teachers who have experience in both types of school.

One further point remains to be considered : whether *complete* mixing may not be as "unnatural" as complete isolation ; whether some degree of separation at puberty is not wise ? It is said that for girls especially some measure of seclusion is desirable, and that they no more want to be always in the company of boys than boys want to be always in the company of girls. There is truth in this ; but it is not an argument against a mixed school. For a mixed school can provide, and does provide, opportunities for separation. It no more attempts to force boys and girls together than it attempts to keep them apart. It may, of course, "force" them to learn their history and geography together, just as it may "force" them to do their needlework and woodwork separately ; no one is likely to suggest that there is anything "unnatural" in either of these arrangements. But it allows them to separate, if they so desire, in their out-of-school activities, and it gives them full liberty to choose their friends exclusively from members of their own sex if they please. It stands for liberty rather than compulsion.<sup>1</sup>

Misunderstanding of this point has been

<sup>1</sup> See section (b) of chap. viii.

responsible for a good deal of the opposition to coeducation. But there are some who carry the argument further ; they not only object to "complete" mixing ; they think that any mixing at all, at the age of puberty, is undesirable ; and they, too, appeal to biology in support of their contention. Stated first in its crudest form, their objection appears to be that Nature sometimes encourages a period of segregation at puberty ; that we should imitate Nature as far as possible ; and that, therefore, boys and girls should see as little as possible of each other during these years. Lady Bellingham appears once more, on the other side this time. As thus stated, there are obvious objections to the argument. In the first place, we cannot get back to Nature very easily, even if we could agree what getting "back to Nature" really means. For we have travelled a long way from her ; and the right preparation for the lives of animals in a jungle or savage tribes beyond the outposts of civilisation may be the wrong preparation for boys and girls who will have to take their parts in the complex communities of the twentieth century. In the second place, the temporary isolation of the sexes is stated to be Nature's device for preventing premature mating, so that it is absurd to use it as an argument against a mixed school. Or, putting the same

reason in slightly different form, segregation is supposed to be a device for increasing sex-attractiveness later ; which is not at all, one imagines, what the advocates of separate schools are aiming at. There would not appear to be any real need to take special measures to make the sexes more attractive to one another than they already are. Indiscriminate sex-attraction is no longer an ideal ; judgment of the other sex is necessary too ; and that is just what is bound to be lacking amongst men and women until the necessary experience has been gained. The mixed school enables them to gain the experience without paying the full price for it. And thirdly, the successful mixed school is no longer a theory ; it is a fact ; and it is useless to attack a system of educating boys and girls which is successful in practice by a theoretical argument about the customs of savage tribes.

It may be replied, however, that the biological objection is not so much based on analogy as on an instinctive desire of boys and girls to separate at puberty. If this desire is universal, the objection is shifted to safer ground—though it does not follow of course that boys and girls, any more than men and women, ought to gratify every instinctive desire they may happen to have. Some boys, for instance, have an instinctive desire not to go to school at all after the age of fourteen. The argument now assumes



the following form : the sexes have an instinctive tendency to separate for a period of, say, one year ; therefore let us enforce separation upon them for a period of, say, five or six. But is it true that boys and girls in a mixed school have an instinctive desire to separate ? No one who has actually observed their behaviour in a mixed school will have any doubt as to what is the right answer to this question. Boys and girls at some times have a desire to avoid each other, and at other times have a desire to seek each other out ; but for most of the time they have no special desire one way or the other. It is the mixed school which gives them their freedom, the separated school which brings them under constraint. The biological argument has no relevance when applied to a school in which opportunities for separation are provided. But it might have some relevance when applied to a school which enforces a rigid isolation upon members of one sex.

What is likely to be the effect of coeducation upon the relations of the sexes in later life ? Its advocates make very high claims for it. One should write with more caution here, since the good effects of coeducation in the school can be seen, but from the nature of the case the effect in after life has to be estimated rather than described. But there seems no reason for think-

ing, and no evidence, that the effect is bad ; and every reason for thinking, and a limited amount at least of actual evidence, that it is good. Boys and girls who have been educated together should have won their way through to a certain shrewdness of judgment. Shrewdness of judgment is hardly the outstanding characteristic of a boy of eighteen or twenty who, having lived his life apart from girls, suddenly finds himself fired by the grand passion. The coeducated boy is not likely to fall so readily to the charms of the first pretty face that he meets. "A smile—an ankle—a flash of the eye," says one writer, "and behold ! Miss Blank is an angel. Hence love at first sight. Hence all the rest." But the coeducated boy will have seen that smile before ; and we need not doubt that he likes it ; but he knows that it is not necessarily accompanied by all the feminine perfection upon which he has set his heart. He will judge more wisely ; and perhaps he will not have to repent at leisure because he will not marry in haste.

Further, if he has been through a school where the tone is good, he will have developed a more dignified ideal of relationship between the sexes. Woman is not the plaything of his lighter moments. He has come to have a more lasting respect for her, because he knows her better ; true respect cannot be based on

ignorance. He will expect more ; and he knows that if he expects more he must give more.

Coeducation has indeed been opposed on the ground that it will tend to destroy Love ! One eminent opponent thought it would hinder marriage ; if men had too much experience of women it would lead, he thought, to "disillusionment and disinclination to marriage." Women are not likely to be grateful to him for the word "disillusionment." For what it implies is that women are not worth marrying, and that upon closer acquaintance with them men will find this out. Better an unhappy marriage, so the argument must be presumed to run, than no marriage at all. In which form we may leave the thesis to be defended by those to whom it appeals.

In sober fact there is not the slightest ground for thinking that coeducation, or any other system of education, will affect the primary instinct of men and women. Mr Badley, indeed, has given statistics in his book on *Bedales* which suggest that the proportion of Old Bedalians who have married is above the average, though figures based on the experience of one school must be accepted with considerable reserve. What coeducation may in time eradicate is the mystery, the false glamour ; what it discourages is the foolish choice. It will not make men

and women less ready to choose ; but it may help them to choose more wisely. .Because coeducation may kill Cupid it will not kill Eros. Indeed Eros cannot be born until Cupid is dead.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SCHOOL AND SOCIETY

THE argument of the last chapter has been that coeducation is desirable on moral grounds, for the good of the boy or girl as an individual. But the claim has also to be made that it is of benefit to them as citizens, and is desirable on social grounds, for the good of the community as a whole. Once again, its advocates view it as a "natural" development. But whereas "natural" has so far meant "like the family," now it means "like the world." The world being "man and woman," so the school should be "boy and girl." That boys have to live the lives of men, and that girls have to live the lives of women, are half-truths ; the whole truth is that boys and girls have to live the lives of men and women together. And they can only properly be trained for that in each other's company, and in surroundings which are common to both. This is one of the cases in which two halves are not equal to one whole.

If the school were a teaching-shop ; if it existed for the purpose of instruction only, it could evade this challenge. But in proportion

as a school becomes a kind of correspondence college, so it ceases to be what all educationists have meant by a school. For a school is more than a place of intellectual instruction ; it is more, even, than an agency for moral instruction ; it is a training-ground for citizenship. It is a preparation for life. And so it is bound to have relations with the community itself. It should be like the community—though not quite like it. It should be similar but not identical. It should be a compound of existing society and an ideal one. Sociology deals with the world as it is ; it is for education to deal with the world as it might be. "Education," says Mr J. L. Paton, "is the science of the world as it is capable of becoming." The world deals with men and women ; therefore the school must deal with boys and girls. But whereas the relations between men and women are often wrong, it is for the school to show how the relations between boys and girls can be supremely right.

The problem has to be faced ; it cannot be evaded. There are those who would try to evade the moral problem by separating the sexes ; in the long run they complicate the problem rather than simplify it. The same is true of those who would evade the social problem by the same method. The school as a training-ground for society loses all its value if it contains one sex

alone. It is not merely that the picture is incomplete ; that it lacks the " finishing touches " which can be put later. The finishing touches cannot be put later. The picture is entirely falsified from the beginning. The single-sex school has " simplified " the problem by abstracting an essential element. To train boys for citizenship apart from girls, or girls apart from boys, is like " simplifying " a problem in the differential calculus by making the supposition that the variable should remain constant. It is like preparing for a boxing match—though Heaven forbid that one should press the analogy too far—by punching a stationary ball instead of a sparring partner. The Mixed Schools Committee of the Head Masters' Association, with a happier choice of simile, has compared the function of the mixed school to that of a stereoscope ; it gives unity and meaning to two distinct pictures.

In a narrow sense, life has always been " man and woman." " At the bottom of all evil," say the misogynists, " you will find a woman." They neglect to mention that she will be found in close company with a man. The relationship between an individual man and an individual woman has always been of importance to society. When the relationship has gone wrong, it has been a festering sore in the body politic. When

it has gone right, it has been the germ-cell of much that has enriched life.

But a much broader problem is now presenting itself for solution. It is a problem created by the success of the woman's movement, a problem unknown until the last fifty years. Life is now "man and woman" in much more than a merely personal sense. A man may marry the woman of his choice, but he will be obliged to work with women whom he has not chosen. And, no doubt, with women who would not have chosen him.

It is difficult to realise the full extent of the changes which the last century has brought to the position and outlook of women. Perhaps the difference in outlook may be crystallised in one or two quotations. In the eighteenth century a sister of Sir Joshua Reynolds was able to write :

The love of praise in a female breast should never transcend the domestic sphere: perhaps the most perfect feminine mind habitually aims at nothing higher than an exemption from blame.

At the beginning of the last century Lady Pennington offered the following advice to her niece :

A sensible woman will soon be convinced, that all the learning her utmost application can make her mistress of, will be, from the difference in education, in many points, inferior to that of



a schoolboy : this reflection will keep her always humble, and will be an effectual check to that loquacity which renders some women such insupportable companions.

And for many years later than the time of Lady Pennington, woman's sphere continued to be, almost exclusively, the home. The ideal presented to the growing girl was to be " amiable and inoffensive." And an excellent ideal too, so far as it goes ; but it does not go very far. The following quotations, from the writings of a Mrs William Ellis, may serve to illustrate what was quite a usual outlook even as late as the fifties :

It is the privilege of a married woman to be able to show, by the most delicate attentions, how much she feels her husband's superiority to herself ; not by mere personal service . . . but by a respectful deference to his opinion, a willingly-imposed silence when he speaks.

She will gain his confidence, says this lady, by a " respectful deportment and a complying disposition." Mrs Ellis was, however, a realist ; lest it should be thought that she had any illusions about mankind, one further quotation should be given :

All women . . . should be prepared for discovering faults in men, as they are for beholding spots in the sun, or clouds in the summer sky.

Well, it is all changed—as anyone will realise who will read these interesting sentiments to a modern woman. The position of woman has been revolutionised as completely as the outlook. The change in outlook has partly altered the position ; the change in position has partly altered the outlook ; they have developed together. Woman has invaded everything. She swims the Channel ; she sits upon the magistrate's bench ; she enters Parliament. She designs memorial theatres. She reads papers to the British Association. She has a footing in every one of the leading professions : medicine ; law ; the Bar ; teaching ; accountancy. She has not only entered the professions ; she is to be found in every branch of business—as a shorthand typist, a shop assistant, a secretary, a bookkeeper, an advertising agent, a saleswoman. Over two hundred women held company directorships in 1927. There are even women engineers. The Head Mistresses' Employment Committee issued in 1927 details of occupations which they recommended as suitable for girls who were not going on to a University and who did not want to become clerks or shorthand typists. The list included the following : almoners ; architecture ; book-selling ; chiropody ; Civil Service appointments ; commercial art ; dairy work ; dispensing ; dressmaking ; electrical work ; foreign correspondents ; gardening ; hairdressing ; health visit-

ing ; hospital nursing ; hotel management ; house decoration ; institutional administration ; journalism ; laundry management ; librarianship ; massage ; millinery ; nursery nursing ; optical work ; pharmacy ; photography ; political organising ; poultry farming ; publishing ; welfare work.

All these things, and many others, women are now doing. Sometimes it is complained that prejudice against them exists : against the woman doctor or the woman accountant, for example. There is no doubt at all that it does. Much will have to be done yet before the full ideal of "*la carrière ouverte aux talents*" is realised. But the really striking thing is not the number of doors which still remain virtually closed, but the number which in half a century have been opened.

And there has been a still more important advance. Woman has not merely entered the professions and business ; she has entered public life as well. She is a citizen, an essential part of the body politic ; she has a vote. All the political parties desire her vote ; most of them are glad enough to have her influence and counsel too. Man needs her help, it is argued, to diagnose and cure the ills of his disordered society. For he cannot, one would think, be altogether proud of his own handiwork. . . . It is no answer to say that in his place woman would have made matters worse. Very likely

she would ; but the point is that, together, they might make it so very much better. Perhaps, together, they might build up a civilisation in which none shall dominate but all shall serve.

Whatever view is taken of the matter, one fact stands out. The position of woman in society has been revolutionised in the last few generations. Society is not now solely concerned with the relationships of men and women as individuals ; it is concerned with their relations in industry and commerce, and above all in the broader fields of our civic and national life. That is a new position, and it has to be met by the schools. The world has changed ; the schools must change too.

How are they meeting this new position ? The separated school is meeting it by ignoring it. It has not, presumably, noticed as yet that it exists. It sends boys and girls out into the world with no knowledge of each other. It keeps them during their most impressionable years in artificial surroundings and throws them out into the stream of life unprepared for what is to come.

The coeducational school, on the other hand, can make a contribution of real value. Boys and girls in such a school, in the first place, become accustomed to the presence of each other.

The school admitted them on equal terms. The girl is not an intruder. She is as much a part of the scheme of things as the boy ; which is something. And the sexes become accustomed to working together ; which is more. The boy does not look on the girl as a companion with whom to amuse himself if he has nothing better to do ; she is a partner in ordinary work. And, he discovers, she is capable of taking it quite seriously, too. What is more, he finds that she is a person with whom it is possible to hold quite an intelligent conversation. Not about such things as football, of course ; one must allow that at bottom girls are a *bit* queer ; but still . . . If their attitudes do not at once become everything that a coeducationist would desire, at least they show an advance ; the boy is not so obviously lord and monarch of all he surveys ; the girl not quite so self-sufficing.

The lesson of co-operation is learned unconsciously at first ; but it is one of the most valuable lessons the mixed school can teach. The school is rich in things that boys and girls can do together. Even in activities which appear to be separate, such as games, they are working, in their different ways, for the same ends ; the girls' netball successes bring the House points equally with the boys' football. They work, perhaps, for the success of the school Mission ; again, it may be, in differing ways ; but again

to a common end. They co-operate on form committees, in the school orchestra, or in the choral society. Then there are the boy and girl prefects ; they have slightly differing functions, but some of their duties are in common. The underlying problems are the same ; consultation is needed ; two points of view are better than one. They bring varying gifts to the service of the school ; but it is the same school. Most helpful of all, perhaps, is the co-operation of the sexes over the School Play ; for that is one of the best examples of an activity in which all are interested, but in which neither sex can manage, without obvious loss, to dispense with the other. Actors and actresses are both needed ; the girls can make the costumes, and some of the properties required ; the boys can fix the scenery which the girls may have helped them to paint ; the boys can make also the heavier stage properties ; and they can be the stage electricians and carpenters.

Is it too much to hope that out of all this there will grow, unconsciously enough, the idea that men and women can, and ought, to co-operate later for the same ends when they act upon the larger stage of life ? They bring their differing gifts ; and all are needed. As they co-operate now for the ends of the school, will they not learn to co-operate later in the service of their country ? A woman who was

herself educated in a mixed school has expressed the point of view of the coeducated girl as follows :

She has learnt at school a sense of community and a knowledge of the value of co-operation which is likely to continue, and which will help her to realise in what varied and complementary ways men and women may jointly serve the State. . . . Coeducation does not create in her a feeling of inferiority. It rather forces her to a consciousness of what she can and must do, and to a realisation that she is one of the pillars without which the arch must fall. She is spurred to greater efforts, mental, moral and spiritual, from a sense that her intelligence, her influence and her instinct are needed in order that the intellectual, social and religious life of the school may be perfectly developed. She has much to give, and coeducation shows her how best she may give it, and in how wide a sphere her gifts may be exercised. With her help the loom will weave a richer and a more enduring fabric.<sup>1</sup>

The question of co-operation is, however, only one aspect of the matter. Men and women have differing points of view ; so have boys and girls ; the mixed school affords them a unique opportunity for realising each other's point of view. Each sex encounters a point of view, a range of interest, which is not its own, and which has to be reckoned with. It is no longer possible

<sup>1</sup> Miss D. K. Horne, loc. cit.

to take the simple view of John Howard, who wrote in 1758 :

My dear, for the prevention of those discords which I have observed to prevail amongst married people, it is my wish that in case of any disagreement arising between us my will should prevail.

To realise another point of view is to become more tolerant ; it is to acquire a wider outlook and a completer understanding ; and, therefore, it is to act more wisely ; but it does not follow that assimilation of the point of view follows. As boys and girls come slowly to see the existence of another attitude, certain extravagances of their own views may disappear ; and they may profit from what is best in the other's attitude. But it is unlikely that the boy will become " like " the girl, or the girl " like " the boy. Some of the opposition to mixed schools will vanish when it is realised that they do not attempt (*a*) to turn boys into girls, or (*b*) to turn girls into boys, or (*c*) to turn both into some intermediate " neutral " sex. They do not attempt these things because they know (*a*) that they can't do them ; (*b*) that it would be foolish to do them even if they could.

It would appear probable that there always will be a man's point of view and a woman's point of view. What the coeducationist aims at is that each sex shall have some knowledge of the



different outlook of the other. Instead of trying to eliminate the differences, he is trying to bring the attitudes into fruitful relations with each other. He aims, not at the destruction of sex-differences, but at their mutual adjustment. He hopes, that is to say, that boys and girls who are educated together will gradually acquire the faculty of accommodating their differing attitudes ; that they will arrive at a means of living with a point of view which is not their own. And this is a matter which is of vital importance to citizenship later.

Sometimes there is nothing to do with an opposing point of view but to assail it. But no reasonable person wishes to see a battle to the death between the man's point of view and the woman's. Both sexes inhabit the world ; they have to live together ; and it is abundantly clear that neither can dispense with the other ; they ought, therefore, to study seriously how best to adjust their outlooks. And how they can learn to do this when they are herded together in separated schools is not very obvious. Professor Welton, no lover of mixed schools, thought that one aim of education was the " more perfect mutual adaptation " of sex-qualities. That is precisely what the coeducationist thinks ; but he may be forgiven for wondering how an adaptation of sex-qualities is possible in a community which contains only one sex. The technique of

accommodating one's differences can hardly be acquired until one knows what the differences are.

The mixed school, therefore, considered in relation to society, is trying to accomplish three things. It is trying, first, to create a sense of unity and inter-dependence between boys and girls. "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee." It is trying, secondly, to facilitate co-operation between the sexes—both because co-operation at all times, and in all places, is better than competition, and because it is becoming urgently necessary in the changed social conditions of our time. It is trying, thirdly, to teach the lesson of toleration and the art of living with an outlook which is not one's own. And though coeducationists do not think that any one of these things is automatically achieved by the mere mixing of boys and girls, they are justified in pointing to the experience of school after school where some progress towards these aims has been made, and in saying that though the mixed school may fail to reach these aims, other types of schools must fail.

To say that, in practice, the mixed school does not completely achieve any one of its aims is only to say that it is like all other schools; indeed, all other human institutions. Coeducationists can only point to what they believe to be a possible means of progress; they have no auto-

matic method of producing order and progress out of the chaos of the present century. Coeducation is not a panacea. No educational system can be a panacea. Social well-being is a product of human institutions and human nature ; and human nature, at one moment generous, self-sacrificing, altruistic, loyal, at another moment is acquisitive, cruel, self-centred, intolerant. Education can modify it, though instruction cannot ; but the process is age-long. And though bad institutions may ruin society, good institutions, of themselves, will not save it. But the spirit that might save it can find expression more easily and naturally through good institutions than through bad ones. Coeducation is simply one of the good ones. It can hope, as its influence grows, to do something to make people more tolerant and broad-minded ; and it holds out very definite hopes of improving the relations between men and women, and of preventing that stupid massing of the woman's interest on the one side and the man's on the other which is fatal to the hopes of a harmonious world. No one wishes to see a permanent woman's movement, with its corollary of a permanent man's one. We have too many of these jarring and competitive forces as it is. We erect too many barriers. "Men and women," not "men or women," must be the watchword for a progressive future.

To deplore the barriers is one thing ; to remove them is quite another. There are many practical difficulties in the way. And we are not always willing to pay the price. Some coeducationists may have been a little too ready to claim that coeducation will solve all the problems arising out of the equal citizenship of men and women. Nothing will solve these problems but a combination of hard thinking and active goodwill. But, lacking the right institutions, even hard thinking and active goodwill may fail. The claim for the mixed school is not that it will solve our problems ; it is simply that it will create the conditions in which their solution will be possible.

The urgent need of society is that men and women shall come to understand each other more. Is separation, or is association, more likely to lead to a better understanding ? On the answer to that question depends the value of the mixed school as a social institution.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CURRICULUM

To argue that coeducation is desirable, alike on moral and on social grounds, is a very different thing from arguing that it is possible. In considering its practicability there are three main questions to face: (*a*) Do boys and girls need to study the same things? (*b*) If so, are there essential differences in their capacities which make it difficult to educate them together? (*c*) Are there any essential differences in their ways of learning which make it difficult?

In this chapter we shall consider the first of these questions. And we note first that boys and girls, in fact, study very much the same things even when they are taught in separate schools. The kindergarten courses are identical. In the next stage of education there is little or no difference in curricula. In the primary schools boys and girls learn to read and write; they all study History and Geography, Scripture, elementary Arithmetic and Drawing. Almost the only difference observable is that girls usually take Needlework and boys devote that time either to further practice in Arithmetic, often

a valuable course in practical measurements, or to some form of manual training. An older practice, when manual training was impossible for the boy, was for him to devote more attention to drawing. In the secondary school both boys and girls are obliged by the Board of Education regulations to take English Language and Literature, History, Geography, Mathematics, Drawing, at least one language other than English, some form of practical Science, Physical Exercises and Singing ; while for girls there is the added requirement that the course must include some form of training in Domestic subjects. Girls over 15 years of age may, however, be allowed in special cases to discontinue work in Science and Mathematics (other than Arithmetic). In practice, the broad lines of the curricula of boys' and girls' secondary schools are the same except that boys take a course in some form of Handicraft while girls study Cookery, Needlework and some form of Hygiene, and that the branches of Science offered sometimes vary. Most boys' schools take Physics and Chemistry ; most girls' schools take Botany, sometimes in combination with other science subjects and sometimes not. To the outside observer the similarity of the courses is much more apparent than their differences. It should, however, be stated that there is often a difference in stress ; in the girls' school more

time is devoted to English and often to languages generally; in the boys' school more attention is given to Science and Mathematics. But even these differences are not invariably found. Broadly speaking, boys and girls follow the same syllabus; they use the same text-books; they are taught by teachers with identical qualifications; and they are presented for the same examinations at the end of their course. The most that can be said is that a somewhat different combination of subjects is offered.

If, therefore, a secondary school can arrange slightly different "optional" subjects there is no insuperable obstacle, so far as the ground to be covered goes, to teaching boys and girls together. In trade schools, or central schools with a "bias" towards industrial or commercial subjects, the position may be different. Whether boys and girls can then be educated together is a question to be discussed in the light of what their future careers are to be. In vocational training the needs of boys and girls may differ, though not of course necessarily; and in America such separation as occurs is usually arranged for this reason. Even in such schools, however, the main part of the curriculum is often common to both sexes, and there would appear no need to separate them for the greater part of their work. It has been stated recently, on excellent author-

ity,<sup>1</sup> that five hours a week is the maximum time which should be devoted, even in a central school, to strictly vocational subjects, and this, of course, is perfectly compatible with coeducation.

It is possible to argue that in separated secondary schools the curricula of the boys and girls are, in fact, too much the same. And so they are, if by that is meant that few schools of any kind at the moment find it possible to give sufficient latitude to the individual boy or girl to develop his or her own special tastes. But there seems no reason to desire any greater amount of divergency than exists at present between the work of the normal boy and the work of the normal girl.

It is true that, as already suggested, the pioneers of higher education for women aimed too exclusively at copying the existing type of education for men, without considering carefully whether the needs of men and women were in fact the same. But the functions of men and women in actual life are now very much more similar than they were fifty years ago. And it would seem unlikely that the very moment when the work undertaken by women in the world is approaching so closely to that undertaken by men, should be the moment for introducing further differentiation than at present exists

<sup>1</sup> See *The Next Step in National Education*.



in the subjects they study at school. The question has been discussed recently by the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education, who say :

Let boys and girls have a large choice of subjects, and teachers a wide latitude in directing the choice of subjects—such is the policy which we would advocate. It would be fatal, at the present juncture, to prescribe one curriculum for boys and another for girls.

And among the definite recommendations of the Committee there is not one which calls for any further differentiation in the curriculum itself ; but there is one which suggests that in one respect at least the curricula of boys' and girls' schools might be actually assimilated :

That adequate facilities should be afforded for girls who show special aptitude for Manual Instruction to receive it under the same conditions as boys ; and that similar facilities should also be afforded to boys in Domestic subjects.

This proposal is in advance of the normal practice even of coeducational schools. Further reference will be made to it later ; for the moment one notes that, if desirable, the necessary provision could be much more easily made in mixed schools than in separated ones.

We have seen what the curricula of schools

in practice are. Objection has been raised to the secondary school curriculum on the ground that it is too academic, and is not sufficiently practical to meet the needs of many of its pupils. It is not at all too academic for most. Man does not live by bread alone; and it is a reactionary view of education to think of it as merely a training for the business world. Education is a preparation for life in its widest sense; it has been called a preparation for fuller living. But there are those who admit this and who yet think that room should be found in the secondary curriculum for shorthand, typing and commercial subjects. There are others who, just as strongly, object to their introduction. These arguments, however, do not touch the question of coeducation. Commercial subjects need not necessarily involve much differentiation between the sexes; but if they do, the separation can be effected easily enough, and association will still be possible in that core of vital subjects which is at the heart of any adolescent curriculum.

But if, as is possible, the next few years should show a large increase in the numbers of boys and girls receiving some form of post-primary education, then more provision may have to be made than exists at present for courses based on handwork of various kinds. Such courses are likely to come; and it is a matter of indifference to coeducation whether they are run

as parallel courses in the normal type of secondary school, or whether they result in the establishment of separate central or "modern" schools. They will involve some measure of segregation of the sexes, but there will still remain a large group of subjects which they will still study together.

It would take us too far from our present subject to discuss in detail the principles which should determine the curriculum of a school. The simplest principle was Mr Dooley's, that it does not matter what a boy studies so long as he hates it sufficiently. This might indeed justify some differentiation between the sexes. But it has not won a general measure of acceptance. It is sufficient to say that although the components of a post-primary education may vary slightly from age to age, there is no reason to think that they will justify more differentiation than at present exists on grounds of sex ; though there is every reason to think that they will not be held to justify the forcing of all boys and girls into one narrow mould regardless of their differing interests and tastes as individuals. It seems a reasonable conclusion, therefore, that if a coeducational school is able to maintain the amount of differentiation between boys and girls that at present exists in separated schools, and has sufficient elasticity of organisation to enable it to make provision for individual needs,

then no valid objections can be made to coeducation on the grounds of the curriculum. There are indeed reasons for thinking that it can provide even more effectively than separated schools for a variation in individual needs; this point will be considered in Chapter VIII.

## CHAPTER VI

### SEX-DIFFERENCES—I

THIS chapter will be concerned with those differences between the sexes which are primarily intellectual, the following chapter with those which are primarily emotional. The two aspects are so closely connected that it is impossible to study either in entire isolation from the other, but for purposes of discussion a rough division must be made. Before attempting any estimate of the difference in mental abilities and outlooks of boys and girls, however, it will be well to prepare the ground by a brief statement of the known physical differences.

There are first the differences in the essential organs of sex. These do affect the mental state, though the physiological processes involved are not yet completely ascertained. They do not enable us to predict mental differences between boys and girls, but they make it clear that, if such differences are observed, they may be due to physiological factors and not merely to differences in environment and training.

There are, next, various differences in the weights and heights of the Average Boy and

the Average Girl. They are not of great significance from the point of view of coeducation, and little need be said of them. The boy is slightly heavier than the girl until about  $11\frac{1}{2}$  years, when the advantage changes to her side. The difference in her favour, at first very slight only, increases steadily until about  $13\frac{1}{2}$  years, when the weights are 90 lb. and 83 lb. respectively. The girl then loses ground; equality is reached about  $15\frac{1}{2}$ , and at 16 the boy is 2 lb. ahead (111 lb. against 109 lb.) Later the differences become considerable; the figures for adults were given some time ago as 155 lb. for men and 123 lb. for women.<sup>1</sup>

The boy appears to have the advantage in height up to about 11 years, at which age the average heights of the boy and girl are the same, 53.6 in. The girl then progresses more rapidly, and at  $13\frac{1}{2}$  is about 1 in. taller than the boy. She then steadily loses the advantage, and at 16 is nearly 2 in. shorter (64.2 in., boys; 62.2 in., girls). The figures for adults have been given as 67.3 in. for men and 62.5 in. for women.<sup>2</sup>

The brain of the Average Man is slightly larger than the brain of the Average Woman. But these brains are the same in general structure;

<sup>1</sup> Report of the British Association's Anthropometric Committee, 1883, p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> Loc. cit.

and, as the size of the brain is most closely related to the general size of the body, it is precarious to draw any inference as to the relative intellectual capacities of the sexes from the mere weights of their brains. There is but a small correlation between brain-power and the size of the brain. Anatole France, for example, had a brain which was below the average in size.

The age of puberty is earlier for girls than for boys ; among London children the girl's average age is 14 years 2 months, the boy's 14 years 10 months. In the case of boys the deviation from the average is not very great ; but girls vary so very greatly in this respect that to quote an average figure at all may be misleading ; the deviation may be as much as two years on either side of the figure given.

After puberty there is a lessened amount of hæmoglobin in the girl's blood, making her readier to fatigue and less able to stand prolonged exertion—rendering her, in fact, more liable to anæmia.

Adolescence is a time of special nervous and physical strain, and it is clear that the periods of strain of the two sexes are likely to come at different times. These two facts, namely, the girl's earlier arrival at maturity, and her subsequent liability to overstrain, may affect, and the first usually does affect, the comparative rates at which boys and girls develop at different

periods of their school careers, and will have to be considered in that connection later.

Finally, the sex-changes during adolescence are followed in the girl by recurring periods of strain when general mental efficiency may temporarily be impaired. The best medical evidence suggests that there are great individual differences in this respect between one girl and another. But there is no doubt that there is a risk of overstraining the girl through unsympathetic treatment at these periods ; and a definite risk that a girl may fail to do her abilities full justice at a moment when she specially needs to do so. This in itself makes it difficult to draw any sure conclusion as to the relative abilities of boys and girls from their performances at examinations.

Dr Adami has summarised some of these physical differences as follows :

It appears to be an established fact that girls in general (1) are not so strong physically as boys ; (2) are more highly strung and liable to nervous strain, which very possibly is associated with the fact that physiologically they are liable to heavier drains upon the circulating calcium of the blood ; and (3) with their thinner blood with lowered hæmoglobin content, after puberty they are nearer to the threshold of anæmia.<sup>1</sup>

These facts have a double bearing upon the problem of coeducation.

<sup>1</sup> Consultative Committee Report, p. 186.



In the first place two direct inferences may be drawn.

(1) It seems wise that the sexes should be entirely separated, so far as games and physical exercises are concerned, as soon as their physical differences become significant. For practical purposes, this means that they will be separated in all forms of post-primary schools.

This separation is the almost invariable practice in State-aided secondary schools, and it seems to be fully justified by the stronger muscular development of the boys ; to keep the two sexes together is unfair alike to boy and girl. The question is purely a question of the relative physiques of boys and girls. Few persons would now suggest that it is "improper" for them to play games together, or to watch each other play ; or that there is any objection to occasional games of tennis together, or to dancing.

Games being an important factor in maintaining the esprit de corps of a school, and coeducationists being anxious to afford every opportunity of out-of-school co-operation to the sexes, some of them think it unfortunate that the separation is necessary ; and one or two attempts have been made to organise "mixed" games even for children of 15 and 16 years of age. Mr Badley experimented in that direction at Bedales, and has told how his plan failed over mixed hockey.

The girls themselves, in the end, disliked it; the boys, they said, upset their superior combination and passing by their rougher and more vigorous style of play. And this is what might have been expected; the boys' greater muscularity made the game uneven. Eventually the attempt was abandoned. One or two private coeducational schools appear still to be making the experiment, and to be satisfied with it; an interesting account is given by Mr and Mrs Pratt in *Advance in Coeducation*. But the modern mixed school is able to offer so many opportunities of genuine co-operation, upon equal terms, to boys and girls, both in and out of school, that it seems as unnecessary as it is unwise to bring the sexes together in activities for which their original physical equipment is different. This, at any rate, is the view, and determines the practice, of all the schools which are within the State system.

(2) The second deduction to be drawn from the differing physical characteristics of boys and girls is that after the age of puberty girls are more liable to overstrain than boys, and great care must be taken to avoid over-pressure. The Consultative Committee have, indeed, recommended that for this reason, the First School Examination should be taken by girls about one year later than boys; in other words, they suggest equating the girl of 17 to the

boy of 16. For some girls this would no doubt be wise, though under present conditions many practical difficulties arise which would mean that a girl whose development was slowed up to too great an extent would be badly handicapped later. It has been objected also that under this arrangement the girl would less often be able to spare the time for post-matriculation specialisation in subjects of particular interest to her ; and on all grounds, moral as well as intellectual, it is generally agreed that the post-matriculation years are often the most valuable years of the school course. Some of these difficulties, for example, those connected with the award of scholarships, may be removed later. There is, however, very great variation among girls in this respect ; no one would suggest that such a slowing-up was desirable for all ; it may turn out in practice, with improved methods of teaching, to be desirable for only a few.

The writer's own limited experience suggests that though there is a greater liability to overstrain on the part of girls, the extent of it is often exaggerated. Mr D. E. Williams, who has had many years' experience as head of the largest mixed school in Wales, has said, " I believe that the greater liability of the girl to overstrain, fatigue and collapse on account of physical and physiological disabilities is overstated. The girl is capable of more sustained effort than the boy,"

who "is perhaps more variable than she is in physical strength." Many women, also, who teach in mixed schools, and whose opinion on such a point ought to be more valuable than the opinion of any man, take a similar view. But the right course for the coeducational school is clear. It must recognise the possibility of overstraining girls and must find methods of avoiding the danger. It will do less harm by overrating the possibility than it will by underrating it. Careful consideration of individual cases is what is needed. Some girls must be encouraged to a more deliberate development than others. The problem of varying rates of development is not a new problem ; it is met with, to a lesser degree, in boys' schools ; and it is capable of solution in any school in which the organisation is sufficiently elastic to follow individual needs. Methods of meeting the difficulty will be discussed much more fully in Chapter VIII.

The second bearing of the physical differences of boys and girls upon the problem of coeducation is simply this : that these differences may be thought to imply, or to cause, corresponding mental and temperamental differences. We have already noted that the rates of learning of the sexes at different ages might differ ; we might reasonably expect other sex-differences to be apparent in the intellectual and emotional spheres.

Whether there are such differences is a totally different question, which has to be examined in itself ; we have no right to *predict* such differences from the different physical structures (which, after all, are much more alike than unlike). All we are entitled to say is, that if we do succeed in finding what look like differences in the mentalities of boys and girls, we can point to the differing physical characteristics as one possible cause of them. But there is the alternative possibility that any differences which we may find between the sexes may largely be due to the differing environments, both past and present, of boys and girls.

The question of the difference in intellectual ability of the sexes (as distinguished from differences due to diverging interests or temperaments) has hardly received any serious attention until recent years. It was never discussed for centuries, since it was taken for granted that woman's ability was inferior. But in modern times, with the rise in status of the woman and the increase in the facilities for the education of her sex, the question has come rapidly into prominence. Discussion of the relative intellectual abilities has been marked by three phases: the phase of the unsupported generalisation ; the phase in which, in an endeavour to be more precise, actual achievements were examined, in the hope

that intellectual differences could be deduced from them ; and the third phase, in which we are now engaged, of scientific investigation of the question by the experimental psychologists.

A flood of loose generalisations characterised the initial stage of the discussion. Some said boldly that women were less intellectual than men. It used to be seriously argued that this followed from the smaller size of the female brain ; the ladies might have countered politely by saying that it was quality rather than quantity that mattered. Miss Charlotte M. Yonge declared "her full belief in the inferiority of woman"—we do that excellent lady no injustice by taking her statement to include intellectual inferiority as well as all the other kinds. Some feminists, on the other hand, have declared that women have all the intellectual qualities of men and a few more of their own in addition. Women were generally held to be more "imitative" ; men more "creative." It was fairly generally agreed that "girls have no heads for mathematics," but men chivalrously sought to restore the balance by conceding them a slight superiority in literary subjects. There was, in fact, no end to the making of confident generalisations about men and women. "As many heddes, as many wittes there been." It was great fun ; a game in which there were prizes for all. You could not be proved wrong, for there was no standard

against which your assertions could be measured. One man's word was (nearly) as good as another's—and, of course, a great deal better than any woman's. The game is still played in clubs, debating societies and other places where judgment is passed on the universe. But something a little more reliable is needed for the purposes of the schools.

Attempts have been made, therefore, to get to closer grips with the problem by comparing the actual performances of boys and girls. This in itself was a praiseworthy, even if novel, idea ; instead of discussing theoretically what boys and girls might be expected to do, to go to the examination lists and find out what they actually did do. Unfortunately, however, from the point of view of discovering differences of intellectual ability, the method leaves a good deal to be desired ; for what is tested by examinations is achievement, and achievement depends on many factors, of which intellectual ability is only one. There have, indeed, been cynics who have asserted that ability to pass examinations is in inverse ratio to intelligence ; and in any case it is obvious that many other factors enter into the matter. There is the ability to "cram," rather mechanically, which is sometimes but not always defeated by the examiner : habits of application, which probably vary with the amount of interest taken in the particular subject ; the quality of the

teaching received ; the length of time spent at the subject ; the factor of physical fitness, and so on. Some of these factors will have an effect which will tend to average itself out over a large number of candidates ; others will be likely to affect unequally the two groups of boys and girls. It is further to be remembered that it is the policy of some schools to present candidates for examination when they judge the candidates to be fit, and (if they can help it) not before ; and in so far as this is the case, examination results can only be said to test the relative accuracy of men and women teachers in forecasting the results ! Again, the backward girl may, and often does, remain at school longer than the backward boy, who may be removed by his parents before he has been presented for any examination. To compile examination statistics is one thing ; to interpret them accurately is quite another.

It is, however, worth while to see what the evidence of examinations actually is, since a knowledge of the relative achievements of the sexes under existing conditions is in itself interesting. The most striking feature of examination statistics is, perhaps, the astonishing closeness of boys and girls—astonishing to anyone who remembers the state of girls' education half a century ago. In 1922 the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education investigated



the marks gained in the recent Cambridge Local Examinations and reported as follows :

The marks gained by boys were higher in Mathematics (including Arithmetic), Chemistry, Physics, and Latin, and to a slight extent also in Physical Geography. On the other hand, girls showed a very noticeable superiority in English Literature and a distinct superiority in English Composition, English History, Botany, Geography, and French, including oral French. Girls also did better in model drawing and design.

The conclusion of the Committee was, roughly, that boys did better than girls in Latin, Mathematics, and in branches of Science depending on Mathematics ; that the girls were better than the boys at Literature, History and Modern Languages ; but that in other subjects there was no noticeable difference.

It is understood that the result of a later and private investigation of the records of another Examining Body (not by the Consultative Committee) was to bring out once more a slight superiority of boys in Mathematics and of girls in Modern Languages, but otherwise to disclose no essential differences. (As boys and girls so often take different branches of Science, comparison there is often impossible.)

The Chief Examiner to the London County Council, Mr B. C. Wallis, dealing with the

achievements of boys and girls of a much younger age, 10, finds that boys score more freely than girls in Arithmetic, but thinks that in English there is no essential difference. But he adds that he could set Arithmetic papers on which girls could score at least as well as boys, and he concludes that "the sexes perform differently." Previous examiners, however, formed the opinion that on an average the girls were somewhat superior in English.

Again, some years ago Mr G. F. Burness, Head of the West Ham Municipal Secondary School, analysed the results of the Cambridge Local Examinations for a series of years and published the statistics in his *La Coéducation dans les Ecoles Secondaires*. As Mr Burness is head of a mixed secondary school and approached the subject from that angle, his results are of special interest. They showed, broadly, no very striking differences in achievement except in Mathematics, where the boys were quite definitely superior.

It seems clear, therefore, that examination results do not suggest that there is any great difference in the relative abilities of the sexes except so far as Mathematics is concerned, in which subject boys on the whole are obtaining better results. There is, therefore, a *prima facie* case for considering how far this may be due to real difference in intellectual power between

the sexes ; whether, in fact, there is real substance in the dictum, often repeated and widely believed, by teachers of experience as well as by members of the general public, that "girls can't do Mathematics as well as boys."

All that the above examination statistics have shown is, of course, that at the present moment, and in the examinations quoted, girls *don't* do Mathematics as well. But for this there would appear to be several possible explanations without assuming a lesser degree of intellectual capacity.

(a) Girls may not be as well taught as boys. There is every reason to believe that this is true. Competent men teachers have been fairly easy to obtain, but until very recently the demand for really well-qualified woman teachers of the subject has been in excess of the supply. But in this respect the position is now rapidly improving ; and that this factor has influenced the achievements of girls is made all the more probable in that the most recent examination results do not show so great a degree of inferiority of girls as the results given by Mr Burness.

(b) Girls may not have devoted so much time to the subject as boys. This is almost certainly true, and is a very important factor. On the whole, even in the elementary schools, boys have usually been given a greater allowance of

time for Arithmetic than girls; and in the secondary school tradition has almost always made Mathematics take a less important place in the girls' curriculum than in the boys'. The reasons for this need not here be discussed, the fact being well established; but only too often the unfortunate girl has been expected to study practically all the subjects taken by her brother, and also to add to them such subjects as Needlework, Cookery, Laundry Work, and Instrumental Music.

(c) Mathematics is usually taught to boys in connection with Physics, and very often in connection with Mechanics too. Both these subjects offer a fertile field for the application of mathematical principles, and a boy studying them is benefiting his Mathematics in two ways: his Mathematics is invested with a greater interest, in that he sees that it is capable of immediate and useful application; and he is, at the same time, obtaining still more practice in performing mathematical operations. In girls' schools, on the other hand, Botany is a more usual branch of Science to study than Physics; but it has far less connection with Mathematics, and a girl studying it is deriving little or no indirect help for her Mathematics.

(d) Girls may have less interest in Mathematics than boys. This might simply be the result of less intellectual power, but such a conclusion

by no means follows. The lack of interest might be due to some other cause, which might be modifiable. Mathematical examples and illustrations, for instance, are usually drawn from regions of life and activities with which the boy is brought into more frequent contact than the girl.<sup>1</sup>

(e) There remains also the consideration, already mentioned, that for emotional, and sometimes also for physical, reasons girls may fail to do themselves justice under examination conditions to a greater degree than boys.

Some of these explanations would not apply in the case of a coeducational school, where boys and girls are taught by the same teachers and usually (but not always) devote the same amount of time to the subject, and an examination of statistics based on a large number of such schools would be interesting. Unfortunately no collected statistics of this kind appear to be available, and the evidence from coeducational schools is conflicting. The experience of some is that a definite superiority of boys' over girls at Mathematics can still be traced; others report that they can find no appreciable difference.

It should be mentioned that Mr Burness, to whose investigations reference has already been made, has supplied statistical evidence from his own school, showing a quite definite advantage

<sup>1</sup> See p. 154.

on the side of the boys. He was so clear about this advantage that he finally abandoned the plan of teaching mathematics to mixed classes, and taught the sexes separately in this subject. But it is impossible to generalise from the experience of one school, where special circumstances of one kind or another may arise (e.g. any given mixed school may, owing to competition with other schools, attract the best boys in the neighbourhood, but not the best girls, or vice versa), and in any case even in a coeducational school some weight might apply to the factor (c) above, and some would probably apply to (d) and (e) also.

The writer ought perhaps to add the modest testimony of his own experience, the result of teaching the sexes both together and separately, and of examining some ten thousand boys and girls for one or other of the First Examining Bodies. He thinks that the difference in achievement between the sexes is so small as to be negligible in comparison with the obvious and great differences between a good boy and a weak boy, or between a good girl and a weak girl; and his own view is that no analysis of examination statistics has yet yielded any difference in achievement between boys and girls which could not be naturally and easily accounted for by the above reasons without postulating a difference in actual ability for Mathematics.

The conclusion, then, is this, that examination statistics, taken by themselves, cannot be accepted as unimpeachable evidence of the relative innate abilities of boys and girls. They are affected by too many extraneous factors ; and some of these factors are too subtle to be isolated and measured by any form of statistical analysis.

A more scientific discussion of the problem of the relative intellectual powers of the sexes may be expected from the psychologists. Investigations carried out with mental tests commonly report separately data obtained from boys and girls ; and thus a good deal of evidence is now available. Some of the vague generalisations of the earlier stage have already given place to the less ambitious but very much more careful and precise statements of the scientist. In the last resort, even the psychologist can only test achievement ; but he has at his command much more effective and accurate methods than that of comparing examination results ; and he is able to devise tests which show a high degree of correlation with intellectual ability, and which are, he claims, for all practical purposes, tests of innate capacity.

These tests have only been applied on a really extensive scale to elementary schools, and hence mainly cover the years up to 14. It seems desirable that these or similar tests should be

applied to central and secondary schools. The psychologist, however, would probably claim that results obtained from testing secondary school material would in any case furnish information of doubtful value as regards the relative abilities of adolescent boys and girls as a whole, since secondary school pupils are not typical. All the evidence so far collected goes to show that boys as a class exhibit a somewhat greater range of variability than girls ; and hence even if there were no difference between the average abilities of boys and girls, one would expect to find, in a sample taken from secondary school pupils, a higher proportion of outstandingly good boys than of outstandingly good girls. Let it be added that one finds a similar preponderance of males among the pupils of schools for mental defectives.

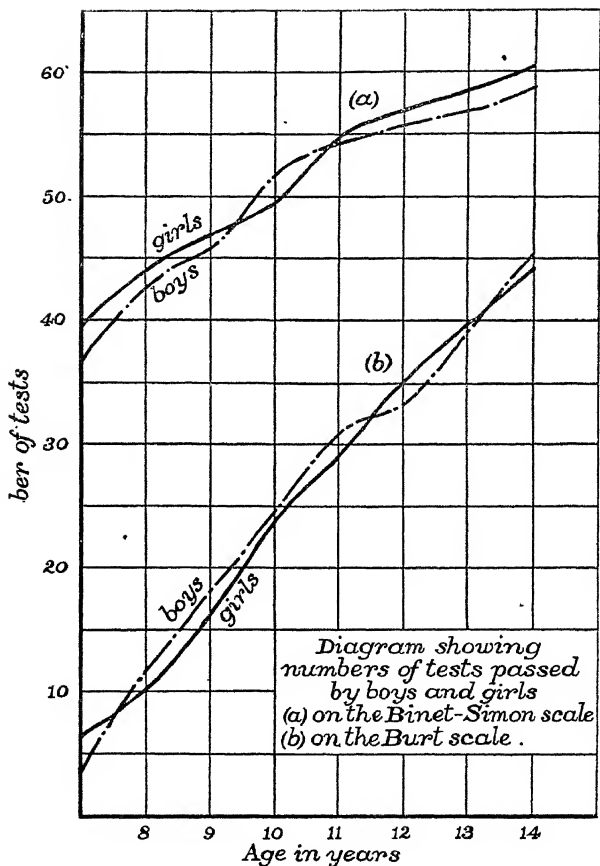
Before dealing with the tests of general intellectual ability it is as well to see the results of the tests the psychologists have applied to different subjects. Professor Burt has collected statistical information as to the performances of boys and girls in the various subjects of the elementary school curriculum. The reader who is interested may be referred to the tables given in Appendix III of his *Mental and Scholastic Tests* (published by P. S. King & Son), where average performances in standardised tests are tabulated for all ages from 5 to 14. There is no space here to



do more than summarise the leading features of his results.

Both as regards vocabulary and speed of reading, the girl is slightly superior at all ages ; as regards comprehension of what is read, the boy is superior from 5 to 7, the girl at all other ages up to 14. In Spelling and Dictation the girl has an advantage at all ages, though, like most of these differences, it is exceedingly small, not amounting on the average to more than about 1 per cent. In Mental Arithmetic the girl is slightly inferior at all ages ; in Written Arithmetic she is markedly inferior throughout, particularly in problem work. In speed of writing and in quality of writing the advantage lies with girls, particularly between 10 and 11 years of age. In Drawing the girl is inferior till about 12 ; at 13 she is about equal to the boy, at 14 she is some 3 per cent. better. In speed of handwork there is little to choose ; in quality the boy is definitely better throughout. In both speed and quality of composition the girl is always ahead of the boy, at some stages by as much as 10 per cent.

The same approximate equality of boys and girls appears when the psychologist measures their "general intellectual ability." The best known of the tests employed is the "Binet-Simon" scale for testing intelligence. According to these tests, girls outstrip boys at almost



every age from 5 to 14, the only exception being about 10, when the boys have a slight superiority. But the difference is small, the girls on the average being only some four months in advance of the boys. The Binet-Simon tests, however, have been criticised, partly on the ground that they are biased in favour of linguistic ability, and partly on the ground that they do not give very satisfactory results with children who are above the average in intelligence; and in results got with other tests the girl cannot claim a superiority at all ages; the sexes pass and overpass each other constantly between 7 and 14. Of other methods of testing intelligence, one of the best known is the series of Reasoning Tests due to Dr Burt. The results obtained by using these tests suggest that the boy is superior from 8 to 11, the girl at 12 and 13, and that the boy reaches and surpasses her once more about 14.

The diagram on page 127 shows the relative intellectual abilities of the sexes as measured by both series of tests. The reader can hardly fail to be struck, not by the difference between boys and girls, but by the lack of difference. Dr Burt's own comment on his results is illuminating :

During school age, sex-differences are extremely small. In mixed departments, where the boys are taught the same curriculum by the same teachers, the differences are so small as to defy demonstration until very large groups have been tested.

Of such small importance does Dr Burt think these differences, of such small importance do experimental psychologists as a whole think them, that they usually give "norms" of achievement for boys and girls together regardless of sex.

What has been considered so far is "average" ability only. The deviation from the mean, in both sexes, is very great. In boys it tends to be somewhat greater than in girls. No teacher will have any doubt about the great variability of both sexes. It is strongly brought out by the psychologists' measurements. It is so great as to rob the minute sex-differences of any practical importance.

As it is the most significant fact dealt with in this chapter, it is worth a little emphasis; and it may not be out of place to quote a striking illustration of Dr Burt's.

The children of a certain borough were asked to write a composition upon G. F. Watts' picture, "Hope." The quality of the best essay, the work of a child of 10 years 8 months, may be judged from the opening paragraphs:

Sublimely, majestically sorrowful she seems. Yet her name is Hope. Cowering low, not in submission to Fate, but longing for happiness, she sits, blindfolded; and fingers, lovingly, the one vibrating string of her lyre, striving to create sweet melody. The first beam of sunshine is

kissing her feet; and in her inmost soul she wonders whether the time will come when it will kiss her drooping head.

She is the good spirit of the world, and the ruler of the minds of those who dwell in it. In the darkest hour of night she visits us, and helps us to wait patiently for dawn and the light.

That was the beginning of the best essay ;  
and this was the whole of the worst :

Wos a pon a tim a putr of a lrg sitndan was out  
a bot ro stne no.

which, according to Dr Burt (and it is difficult to contradict him), should be translated as follows:

Once upon a time a picture of a girl sitting  
down without any boots or stockings on.

And these are children of the same age, educated in the same town and within a few yards of each other. Even that does not exhibit the full range of possible variation. One pupil was entirely unable to write anything at all, and could do no more than give a verbal description of the picture in the following terms :

There's a lady. There's a chair. There's  
her feet. There's her hair. There's her nose.

Something may be said, of course, in favour of even this attempt. Four of its five statements

are accurate ; and though the carping critic may feel that it misses something of the inner meaning of the picture he will be obliged to admit that it does at least convey an intelligible idea. It is more adequate as a description of Watts' " Hope," for example, than it would have been of Watson's Soap. But that is about all that can be said for it.

The reader may reply that this is an extreme case. It is ; but every teacher will be able to give, from his own experience, scores of examples which illustrate the same point equally well.

Summing up his conclusions, Professor Burt<sup>1</sup> says :

Throughout it will be observed that evidence for large innate sex difference in mental constitution or educable capacities is very difficult to discover.

There are important physical differences (though these perhaps affect only a small proportion of the whole group to a significant degree) ; there are also important differences in temperament and emotion ; there are, too, fairly broad differences due to training and tradition. But on the higher intellectual levels, at any rate before adolescence is completed, inherent sex differences seem undoubtedly small.

Professor Thorndike,<sup>2</sup> the American psycho-

<sup>1</sup> " The Mental Differences between the Sexes " (*J. Exp. Ped.* I, p. 384 et seq.).

<sup>2</sup> *Educational Psychology*, p. 50 et seq.

logist, who says that "Sex is the cause of only a small fraction of the differences between individuals," is even more emphatic on the question of sex-differences in ability ;

The most important characteristic of these differences between the sexes is their small amount. The individual differences within one sex so enormously outweigh the differences between the sexes in these intellectual and semi-intellectual traits that for practical purposes the sex-difference may be disregarded. As is well known, the experiments of the past generation in educating women have shown their equal competence in school work of elementary, secondary and collegiate grade. The present generation's experience is showing the same fact for professional education and business service. The psychologists' measurements lead to the conclusion that this equality of achievement comes from an equality of natural gifts, not from an overstraining of the lesser talents of women.

The conclusion, then, seems to be that inherent differences between the sexes in the higher intellectual capacities cannot be established, and if they exist at all they are undoubtedly small. It is a reversal of the view of some of the earlier writers on the subject and to some extent of the popular view. It should be carefully noted that no account has been taken, as yet, of differences in interest or differences in temperament ; nor is it suggested that there is no difference on the

plane of the lower capacities. It seems fairly well established, for instance, that girls are superior in tactile perception, colour discrimination, mechanical memory; and that boys are superior in various "tapping" tests and reaction-time tests. The statement is therefore by no means equivalent to an assertion of the identity of the sexes, but even so, the conclusion is significant.' The intellectual differences are small themselves; considered in relation to the very large range of ability within either sex, they are completely insignificant. What is the bearing of this upon the problems of the mixed school?

The conclusion is clear that, so far as their intellectual abilities go, there is no need for the separation of boys and girls, who can be taught together without any loss to either. It may be possible to argue that thirty human beings cannot be taught in one class without loss to someone. But it cannot be argued that the problem of teaching them is, on the intellectual plane, any more difficult if the class includes both boys and girls than it is if the class is composed of members of one sex only. In other words, the coeducationists are completely justified. The theoretical problem, however, has often struck them as in some degree remote from actuality. The Average Boy and the Average Girl may be at home within the pages of the psychological text-book;



no one has ever yet found them in the schools. And the Ordinary Schoolmaster is much too busy sorting out and weighing up the boys and girls he actually has to teach to show very much interest in the enquiry as to whether, if out of all boys an Average Boy could be constructed, he would be cleverer, or more stupid, than the Average Girl. His problem is a more practical one : what is he to say about the abilities at French of the fifty boys and girls in the Lower Fifths? And the only answer to his problem is that he must test them and see, and grade them according to the best of his ability on the results of what they actually do : and be willing to regrade them as soon as his judgment proves to be wrong. Which will be very soon.

It is always an advantage to be able to reclassify pupils for different subjects, and in schools of two hundred or more it is usually possible to do this, at any rate in French and in Mathematics, the subjects for which reclassification is of the greatest advantage. A mixed school too small for a "set" system will, however, be at no disadvantage in this respect compared with a single-sex school of the same size, as the variation in capacity between the boys themselves is almost certain to be greater than the variation between the boys and girls.

This chapter may be concluded with a further

quotation from the Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education, many citations from which have appeared above. The Committee had referred to it in 1920, by the Board, the question "whether greater differentiation is desirable in the curriculum for boys and girls respectively in secondary schools," and it was obvious that it could not solve its problem without considering in some measure what might safely be said about the respective intellectual abilities of boys and girls. There was a clear challenge to it to discover what differences it could. And this is what it said :

Our inquiry has not imbued us with any conviction that there are clear and ascertained differences between the two sexes on which an educational policy may readily be based. We have encountered a number of facile generalisations about the mental differences between boys and girls ; we have found few, if any, which we were able to adopt. Again and again we were assured by our witnesses that one boy differed from another, and one girl from another, even more than boys differed from girls ; and we could not but notice that a superiority which one witness claimed for boys might be vindicated by the next witness for girls. Men and women have existed for centuries ; but either sex is still a problem to the other—and, indeed, to itself ; nor is there any third sex to discriminate dispassionately between the two. As psychological study develops, and as statistical inquiries

and data are multiplied, it may be possible to attain some tangible and valid conclusions. In the meantime it is the part of wisdom neither to assume differences nor to postulate identity, but to leave the field free for both to show themselves.

## CHAPTER VII

### SEX-DIFFERENCES—II

IN the last chapter we saw reason to believe that there are no fundamental differences in capacity between the sexes on the intellectual levels, at any rate not of sufficient magnitude to offer any obstacle to coeducation. But to say that is obviously not to say that the mentalities of boys and girls are alike ; intellect is only one factor, and not even necessarily the most important factor, in the whole mental outlook of an individual. Most people will believe, as the present writer certainly believes, that there are differences, and perhaps large ones, between the mental outlooks of boys and girls, even although they may find it difficult to define them, and though, once more, the variation between members of the same sex is very wide, so wide, indeed, as often to obliterate the sex-differences.

It is difficult to measure intellectual differences ; it is still more difficult to measure differences of interest and differences of temperament. On such levels the age of facile generalisation is not yet over, and some amount of empiricism is inevitable. Once again the teacher has to judge

for himself when he is confronted with his own children, and must not attach too much importance to *a priori* generalisation as to difference in temperament.

It is usually agreed that the interests of the sexes differ. Girls, for instance, seem more interested in persons, boys in ideas ; girls in the concrete, boys in the abstract. In school subjects girls seem more interested than boys in some branches of literature, boys show a greater liking for mathematics.

In more general terms, M. Paul Lafitte has defined his view of the differences as follows :

Parlant en général, une femme semble plus frappée par un fait que par une idée générale ; . . . nous (les hommes) sommes plus intéressés par la relation des choses que par les choses elles-mêmes. L'esprit des femmes est plus concret ; celui des hommes plus abstrait.

with which may be compared the remark of John Stuart Mill that the tendency of women to think of things as separated rather than as in groups, and their more lively interest in the ideas of actual persons, are correctives to the tendency of men to think too much in terms of abstractions. And when the poet wrote :

He for God only, she for God in him,  
he was feeling after the same idea. But perhaps what the poet said is not evidence.

The investigations of the psychologists have led them to very similar conclusions, summed up by Jastrow as follows :

The feminine traits revealed in this study are attention to the immediate surroundings, to the finished product, to the ornamental, to the individual or the concrete, while the masculine preference is for the more remote, the constructive, the useful, the general and the abstract.

The fact that men “ think in terms of abstractions ” sometimes to the exclusion of “ attention to the immediate surroundings ” explains why absentmindedness is probably more common amongst men than women. Mr Wodehouse, in one of his books, has an interesting account of a young man who was so completely absorbed by the task of proposing marriage to a young lady of his acquaintance that he did not notice that throughout the whole of the interview he was holding a dead monkey by the tail. His attention was concentrated on a series of abstract ideas ; but in similar circumstances there is every reason to think that the woman would have paid “ attention to the more immediate surroundings.” In other words, no abstract train of thought would have prevented her from ridding herself of the monkey first.

That there are temperamental differences be-

tween the sexes seems fairly clear. Even here, however, generalisation is difficult ; the traditional classification of temperaments which has come down to us from Galen (though it is of little use) cuts right across the lines of sex. And we have it on the weighty authority of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* that "the sex division does not mark off temperaments into two sharply contrasted groups." However, the psychologists on the whole seem willing to allow us a Woman's Temperament even though they deny us a Woman's Intellect. To quote the Consultative Committee :

Mr Burt pointed out that emotional differences between the sexes were extremely difficult to test, and that the results obtained by different methods and different investigators appeared at first sight to be discrepant. He and Mr Moore had found that women were more emotional, whereas Miss Helen Thompson had ascertained that American men showed more emotional disturbances than American women. He suggested that the apparently conflicting results attained by the different investigators on this subject might be reconciled by the following statement :—that subjectively the emotions of men might be profounder and more prolonged, but in their outward expression the emotions of women might be more sudden and intense. . . . The nature of the emotions predominant in either sex, and the kind of objects arousing emotions, appeared to differ even at

a very early age. . . . In general, the differences in emotional capacities were found to be larger than divergences in higher intellectual capacities, but they were not so large as the sex differences in certain physical qualities and in certain processes of sensation and movement.

The differences in interest may arise from more than one cause. It is conceivable that they are connected in some obscure way with physiological differences ; it is probable that to some extent they directly depend on a difference in the strength of fundamental instincts. All the same instincts are found in each sex, but in varying strengths ; in men, the instincts of pugnacity, acquisitiveness and constructiveness seem stronger ; they also appear to have the "wandering" instinct, and the instinct of curiosity, more strongly developed. In women, the maternal or protective instinct is obviously stronger ; and they are commonly said to be more swayed by the instincts of secretiveness and fear. The differences, however, are probably not so great as they are usually supposed to be, and once more vary considerably with the individual. The third possibility is that the differences in interest may be due to environment and training. If and when they are due to this last cause, they are clearly not fixed, and may be modified ; if they are a development from the instincts, they could only be modified, if at all, over a



very long period of time, and the educator for practical purposes must regard them as fixed. The common-sense view is that these differences in strength of instincts correspond to the differing social functions of man and woman ; man for ages has been the warrior, the adventurer, the breadwinner, woman has been the child-bearer and homemaker. But as the woman nowadays, in view of the altered industrial conditions, is often a breadwinner as well as a homemaker, it is conceivable that, in course of time, some alteration in the strength of the hereditary instincts will gradually take place.

It is probable, on the whole, that the differences in interest are in the main due to environment and training, and that the teacher can do something to modify them if he chooses. The preliminary question for him, therefore, is whether he wishes to try to eliminate these differences or not.

It is a point sometimes urged against advocates of coeducation that they want to eliminate, as far as possible, all differences between the sexes ; that they aim at a slurring of types. But this is no part of their duty or intentions. They would not if they could, and, to a large extent, they could not if they would. Professor Thorndike has said that even if the sexes had identical environments the differences in fundamental instincts would produce differences in the mental

and moral outlooks of boys and girls. The coeducator has no wish to warp anyone's personality. His task is not to mould the minds and wills of his pupils into some preconceived pattern ; it is to create the conditions in which a boy's or girl's personality can develop itself ; it is to clear away the obstacles which impede the free growth of the human spirit. "The teacher no longer prances in front of his ill-fed battalions, but has retired to the base to see to equipment and supplies, and to keep the lines of communication open." And hence, even in a boys' school or a girls' school, the teacher is not aiming at one type ; he is aiming at many ; or rather, he is not consciously aiming at any one, but is trying to stimulate the free growth of many. And a teacher who is not even trying to make all boys equal to one another is still less likely to attempt the still more ambitious and foolish task of equating the girl to the boy. In this sense, it is untrue to say that coeducators want to eliminate sex-differences.

It is not for the teacher to call the mental attitude of one sex the superior, and consequently to try to mould the other to its shape. Both attitudes exist in life—the tendency to "think in terms of abstractions" and the tendency to pay special "attention to the immediate surroundings." Life is made up of their reactions with one another. Where is the

husband who, absorbed in the fascinating by-ways of a complicated train of abstractions, is not grateful for a gentle reminder from his wife, who pays special "attention to the immediate surroundings," that his elbow is resting in the jam?

Nevertheless, differences which originally are no more than normal differences of interest or of temperament may develop into extravagances which are obviously regrettable, and which the coeducator would like to modify if he could. For example, the girl's more emotional nature gives her a greater tendency towards hysteria; no one will wish to encourage her in this. Again, the boy is often not so conscientious in his attitude toward his work; the teacher will surely do good service if he can bring him closer to the girl's attitude here.

The differences of interest and of temperament produce various differences in boys and girls which have been noticed by many people who teach them. A few examples may be given in illustration. As the reader will immediately be able to think of various boys and girls of his acquaintance whose behaviour does not conform to these statements, it will be well to add at once that they do not pretend to be more than the roughest of generalisations. No one has ever yet formulated any statement of the difference in performance, much less of the difference in

attitude, between a boy and a girl which can claim to be universally true.

The girl places a greater value upon feelings. The boy is less emotional, but more practical. The girl is more subjective in her outlook, the boy more objective. Hence girls are more sensitive to praise or blame than boys. The girl is more passive in her outlook, the boy more active ; so that the girl will accept a statement upon authority when the boy wishes to argue about it. The girl seems to have a certain power of rapid intuition ; she “ jumps to conclusions ” and reasons back from them to test their accuracy, while a boy works out the conclusion logically. The girl has a greater power of memorisation than the boy ; and though the boy is more easily able to concentrate upon a given topic, the girl is more conscientious about her work.

Mr D. E. Williams, describing the differences between boys and girls in the lowest forms of the secondary school, says that :

The girl . . . is certainly more “ grown up,” more conscientious and painstaking, with a livelier sense of personal responsibility, than the boy. On the other hand, she is more prone to imitate her elders, resulting in a certain docility—a willingness to give unquestioned acceptance to statements that the boy will subject to many “ whys ” and “ hows.” . . . The relative brightness of the boy in this respect is not always convincing, but is so prevalent as to suggest that

in the main the boy is more critical and constructive than the girl. He is more original in his thinking and more sensitive to fallacies and absurdities in his own conclusions. He observes a parallelism more quickly and can recognise or supply the connecting links between given facts and phenomena with greater certainty and accuracy than the girl, who has shown greater assiduity and patience than he in collecting and tabulating these facts. The girl is more receptive, assimilates more easily and has the more retentive memory, especially for details. She is more concise and neat in the arrangement of her work, and here lies her temptation to waste time in writing up and learning notes. The boy strenuously objects to an excessive amount of this form of activity and is more inclined to offer his own views. The girl is stronger in oral composition, has greater fluency and a quicker and truer grasp of the meaning of words and passages. . . .

On which the only safe comment appears to be that it is a true description of the differences between *some* boys and *some* girls.

Professor Burt,<sup>1</sup> from the angle of the psychologist rather than that of the schoolmaster, sees very much the same picture :

Girls excel in patient and persevering analysis, in attention to minutiae and details, in jumping to presumptive conclusions, in constructing concrete hypotheses or picturing definite situations

<sup>1</sup> *The Development of Reasoning in School Children*, p. 12.

with the aid of the imagination, and, above all, in rapidly extracting the meaning of printed statements and in formulating their solutions in words. Boys tend to be more methodical in their thought processes, and more critical of their own conclusions; they are less wordy and less diffuse; they appear less prone to commit logical fallacies, and more resistant to the suggestions embodied in phrase and form of statement.

These differences have two main bearings upon the problems of coeducation.

(1) When the attitudes of the boy and the girl are not identical, it is often a great gain to each to be brought into contact with the point of view of the other. Thus, for example, the girl has a tendency to "fuss over trifles" which is lessened when she is brought up with boys.

Again, the girl places a greater value than the boy on feelings. It might be a good thing for some boys if they attached greater importance to them occasionally. "Feelings" are a wholesome element in life; a world without sentiment would be poor indeed. But sentiment is apt in some natures, with girls more often than with boys, to degenerate into sentimentality, which is a lack of mutual balance of feelings. From that kind of excess of feeling the girl may be saved by contact with the more unsentimental boy.

It has been stated that the girl is often willing

to accept a statement upon authority ; the boy, on the other hand, wishes to argue about it, or at least to ask questions about it. The girl's tendency probably arises from a small difference in the hereditary instincts made larger by social customs and environment ; it ought to be, within limits, modifiable ; experience seems to show that it is. Here, surely, is a case in which coeducation will benefit the girl particularly. She will become accustomed to the questioning of authority, and will come in time to be willing to "prove all things."

On the other hand, the girl's greater conscientiousness has a good effect upon the boy. A boy discovers that "cleverness" alone will not pull him through ; it needs to be allied to more patience, more care over details, in fact harder work, if it is to come to full fruition.

But it is not only in these more general ways that the sexes benefit from familiarity with each other's attitude ; they are helped by each other in their actual studies.

They are apt, for instance, to stress points differently in the study of history. The girl will tend to be interested in the doings of actual persons, the boy in the effect of one upon another ; she in actual events, he in the connection of events with each other ; she, in other words, in facts ; he, in tendencies. But all these things make up history ; one cannot study

tendencies until one has one's facts. There is a type of boy only too ready to try to do so, to build on the smallest of foundations ; and here he is helped by the example of the girl, who often shows a greater mastery of detail. She helps him, again, in the greater interest she shows in social history, which now receives more attention than formerly ; she learns from him, on the other hand, not to ignore constitutional and political history. Just because boys and girls are apt to approach the history lesson from different standpoints, so its content can be made more varied by a good teacher, and it can have a wider and more stimulating effect upon both boys and girls.

In literature, boys like the adventure-story, the travel-book, at a later stage the speculative work ; girls used to have a preference for tales of home life, for stories with a stronger emotional interest. It is not certain that this preference now persists. But with individual preferences there is no need to interfere. "Studies serve for delight" ; boys and girls can be encouraged to develop their own tastes ; but it is valuable for both also to see another point of view. Boys are more apt to read a piece of literature for its content ; girls for its interest as pure literature and for its æsthetic appeal. This difference so impressed the Consultative Committee that they recommended that girls should be trained to



study pieces of literature specially selected for their intellectual content and for their logical structure. In other words, they wanted the girl brought into closer contact with what they conceived to be the boy's point of view. How can she come to understand it better than by doing her literature with him? And she might give him, in return, some encouragement to see that literature, after all, is *not* written wholly for content, that "Buy Bloggs' Jam" is a sentiment which is expressed less suitably in poetry than in prose, and that there is really more in Tennyson's "Lotos-Eaters" than the fact that "some men were once attracted to a desert island and found it so charming that they stayed there."

Literature is a whole ; it is neither content alone nor form alone, but both ; and it cannot properly be studied, by either sex, if attention is too exclusively directed to one aspect of it.

There is a further important point. If the attitudes of boys and girls differ, so also do the attitudes of masters and mistresses. Hence there is a great gain from having teachers of both sexes upon the staff of a school. In so far as there may be a difference between the man's point of view and the woman's, then the boy or girl educated in a separated school must miss that difference. In the words of Sir Benjamin Gott : " If there be any difference in the kind

of influence exerted by adult members of the two sexes upon younger people, then a coeducational school is the only one in which both points of view can be preserved and both kinds of influence exerted." Men are quite ready to recognise and credit the bracing influence which a man teacher can have with girl students. They sometimes overlook the great power for good which an educated and refined woman can exercise over an adolescent boy.

(2) So far we have seen the different attitudes and outlooks of boys and girls as throwing valuable light on each other ; as benefiting both by an introduction to a point of view in some respects different from their own ; and we have suggested that the sexes gain not only morally but also intellectually from the interplay of their differing attitudes. But it is sometimes suggested that there is a corresponding drawback too ; that boys and girls "take things into their minds differently" ; that the differing angles of approach create a special difficulty for the teacher.

There is, probably, a tendency to over-emphasise this question of the different lines of approach of the sexes. When all is said and done, there is no feminine geography ; there is not much sex in the date of the battle of Waterloo ; and though there are five or six methods of solving quadratic equations, there is little to

discriminate between them on grounds of sex. Boys and girls, wherever educated, have to pass the same examinations at the end of their courses ; they have to answer the same questions ; and to do that they have both to learn the same facts and to acquire the same techniques. And not only so, but they have to draw the same conclusions from these facts ; they have to discuss the character and policy of So-and-So ; and though the boy may be more interested in the policy and the girl in the character, they are expected to show some knowledge of both. That differences exist is, however, certain enough ; but the contention of the coeducator is that, so far from proving an obstacle to coeducation, they give it a special value ; they are full of special opportunity for the teacher.

The different methods of approach resolve themselves usually into a difference of interest. The problem of the teacher is to evoke interest ; this is true whether he is teaching history or French, or the wider lessons of citizenship. It is a matter of common observation that, by skilful presentation of a subject, interest can be aroused which was formerly absent ; the present conclusion is that interest is likely to be aroused rather differently in boys and girls.

This does create a problem of real and special difficulty to the coeducator ; but although it complicates his problems, it does not alter them

in kind. In any school the teacher has to seek for points of contact with his pupils, and to employ half a dozen slightly different methods of approach to a problem to meet the needs of half a dozen different types of boy. It is the common experience of all good teachers that they never deliver the same lesson in the same way twice. In a mixed school, however, the problem is intensified, and to that extent it is arguable that teaching in such a school demands a higher type of skill. Or perhaps it may be said that it forces the teacher to do what he ought to do in any case.

But, if more difficult, it brings with it a greater reward ; for the wider the range of illustration, the more varied the method of approach, which will be found necessary with a class of boys and girls, the more illuminating and instructive the lesson for both sexes. And, indeed, for the teacher too. The contention of the coeducator is that the different methods of approach make the lesson more valuable ; and that there is a very real and definite gain in intellectual value to both sexes just because they do not always look at a given subject in the same way.

Mathematics, for example, used to make its appeal to boys and girls rather differently, largely because the subject had so many practical applications which affected the boy's fuller life

but which were of little interest to the girl. Nowadays, with the girl's wider range of interests, this difficulty is being overcome. But the approach has to be made, once again, through the interests; and in this connection the teacher might remember that there is a Mathematics of Citizenship as well as a Mathematics of Engineering, and also that the human element, with its special appeal to girls, might be introduced into the subject by grouping some of the work round the lives and discoveries of famous mathematicians. Much of interest can be done in this connection, and it is possible that a teacher who will study the connection of the history of mathematics with its teaching may arrive at improvements in methods of teaching which will be of value to teachers in boys' schools and girls' schools alike.

The Consultative Committee were so impressed by the different lines of approach of the sexes to mathematics that they recommended that the teaching in girls' schools should be more practical in its nature, and that girls with little aptitude for the subject should be allowed to drop it earlier. It is not clear, however, that a different *kind* of teaching is possible. To place the emphasis on the practical side of mathematics is universal nowadays; the abstract arises out of the concrete by easy stages; and the steps by which the transition is made are the

same for both boy and girl. At some stage in the process a girl may fall behind ; so also may a boy. The conclusion is, either that they want more skilful teaching, or that they need slower teaching, or that they have no aptitude for mathematics and would do better to leave it alone. But this conclusion affects the boy equally with the girl. The most that can be said is that the girl may fall behind sooner, or more frequently, than the boy ; if this is so, it is a problem which the "set" system is entirely capable of meeting. The classification in mathematics should distinguish between and separate those who are good at the subject and those who are not : not between the boy and the girl.

That there is indeed a "stimulation" of boys by girls, and girls by boys, which is of the utmost help to a teacher, is rarely questioned by those who have had experience of teaching both separated classes and mixed ones. The Consultative Committee reported that :

Several women who had taught in co-educational schools thought the lessons there tended to be brighter and the contributions of pupils more spontaneous and varied than in a girls' school.

And Miss Burstall, who was for many years the head of a great English school for girls,

though not to be classed as an advocate of coeducation, reported of American conditions :

The other advantage which is clearly shown in American classwork is the greater intellectual stimulus due to the intellectual difference between boys and girls, and, it may be, to the unconscious desire of each sex to be at its best in the presence of the other.

Unfortunately the point has sometimes been misunderstood. The word "competition" has been used in this connection, and to speak of the "competition" between boys and girls is to convey a false impression. There is no *conscious* competition between boys as boys and girls as girls ; few mixed schools would encourage the division of their pupils into two rival camps along the line of sex. But there is a very real "stimulation" of one sex by the other, in the sense that their points of view are often complementary ; that their questions often throw light upon a subject from an unexpected quarter ; that what the boy doesn't think of, the girl will. To this advantage of the mixed school, it may be repeated, witness can be borne by many a teacher ; but few of us can have had so good an opportunity of judging as once fell to the lot of Sir Benjamin Gott. He was once in the habit of taking the *same* lesson in Chemistry five times a day : once with a class of boys,

once with girls, once with girls and boys mixed, once with a class of men, and once with a mixed class of women and men. It is to be presumed that he was thoroughly well acquainted with the content of the lesson by nightfall. And his experience was that on practically every occasion the lesson "went" best with the mixed classes.

In this chapter the claim has been made that, so far from either sex suffering from its contact with the other, both sexes actually benefit, intellectually as well as in other directions. If this is true, one would expect in time to find the superiority shown in examination statistics. The interesting comparison would be, not boys with girls, but boys in mixed schools with boys in boys' schools, and girls in mixed schools with girls in girls' schools. No general statistics for the whole of England are available; and if they were their interpretation would be difficult. One set of statistics of this kind has, however, been compiled for a series of years ending in 1926, and is reproduced here by the courtesy of Sir Benjamin Gott. They relate to the secondary schools of Middlesex, of which 17 are coeducational, 13 are for boys only and 10 are for girls only.

These statistics show that the separated schools in the area obtain a good percentage of successes, but the mixed schools obtain a better. Like all



statistics, they may need very careful interpretation. One thing, however, may be asserted of them with some degree of confidence. They form unpromising material for anyone anxious to prove that it is a handicap to a boy or a girl to attend a mixed school.

### PERCENTAGES OF PASSES AT

#### (a) SCHOOL CERTIFICATE STANDARD

| <i>Boys in<br/>boys' schools</i> | <i>Boys in<br/>mixed schools</i> | <i>Girls in<br/>girls' schools</i> | <i>Girls in<br/>mixed schools</i> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 73.0                             | 76.0                             | 47.0                               | 67.0                              |
| 74.2                             | 76.4                             | 66.6                               | 62.5                              |
| 72.2                             | 74.1                             | 66.9                               | 66.2                              |
| 70.2                             | 72.7                             | 67.2                               | 71.2                              |
| 73.4                             | 67.0                             | 61.2                               | 72.4                              |
| 66.9                             | 63.4                             | 73.6                               | 53.5                              |

#### (b) MATRICULATION STANDARD

|      |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|------|
| 59.0 | 52.0 | 29.0 | 40.0 |
| 54.0 | 60.2 | 34.6 | 41.5 |
| 45.5 | 52.8 | 27.2 | 33.3 |
| 44.7 | 54.6 | 34.8 | 46.5 |
| 38.0 | 49.3 | 26.5 | 33.5 |
| 35.2 | 39.1 | 25.2 | 32.5 |

#### (c) HONOURS STANDARD

|      |      |     |     |
|------|------|-----|-----|
| 15.0 | 17.0 | 2.0 | 9.0 |
| 7.1  | 8.8  | 1.7 | 6.7 |
| 12.7 | 3.5  | 1.9 | 4.2 |
| 8.4  | —    | 5.0 | —   |
| 4.6  | 7.7  | 3.1 | 3.0 |
| 5.9  | 8.5  | 2.6 | 2.8 |

The discussion of sex-differences can be summed up as follows. There are certain physical differences ; these necessitate separate games and gymnastics for boys and girls, and indicate the need for special care to guard against nervous strain in the case of the girl. There are intellectual differences, if at all, to a much smaller degree than was traditionally thought ; and there are differences in strength of the primary instincts, which seem to be one agent, though not the only agent, in causing various temperamental and emotional differences. There are differences in interest, too, which are probably more the result of different environments and social conditions than of differing hereditary instincts. In so far as the observed differences of the sexes are due to differences of temperament, it is actually an advantage to each sex to be educated with the other ; in so far as they are due to differences in interests, which may cause a difference in performance, they can be met by elasticity of organisation and by provision of optional subjects, though again it is a good thing for each sex to experience the different point of view of the other ; and it is only when such differences are really "intellectual," that is, when either sex shows such superior intellectual power at any subject that the difference cannot satisfactorily be met by elasticity of organisation, that a case may arise for the separation of the sexes

for that subject. This is purely a practical problem, to be dealt with on practical grounds ; and if separation is necessary, it can, and should, be arranged for such subjects only, so as to give pupils the benefits of coeducation in other ways and directions ; but in actual fact it is precisely when one comes to the intellectual levels that a difference in educable capacity becomes increasingly difficult to discover.

The guiding and governing fact throughout is the great variability of both sexes. The Average Child may be reduced to some sort of docility ; but the Real Child will beat all the text-books ; you cannot pin him down ; in more than one sense, you never can tell what he will be up to next. He defies all laws, all classifications ; if you would teach him, you must study him individually ; and by the time you come to understand him individually you will have forgotten whether he be boy or girl.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PROBLEMS OF A MIXED SCHOOL

THE purpose of this chapter is to discuss various practical points involved in the organisation of a mixed school.

#### *(a) The Organisation of Teaching*

The analysis of the preceding chapters has brought to light several points which require special attention. Separate games and gymnastics will be required for the sexes ; the girls' curriculum must include a course in housecraft, the boys' in handicraft ; and an opportunity must be provided for differing amounts of stress to be laid on various subjects of the curriculum. Thus, for example, some girls may not profit by a full course in Science subjects, but may require a fuller opportunity than some boys of studying languages. It will also be particularly necessary to guard against overstrain in the case of girls ; and it should be added here that additional importance attaches to this need from the fact that girls are often obliged to devote more

attention to home duties than boys. To state the fact is not, of course, to object to it. Again, special problems may be created owing to the differing rates of development of boys and girls at different periods.

It has already been suggested that most of these needs can be met by an elastic organisation. Recent years have seen a wholesome reaction against the rigid organisation of the schools of the early years of this century. Then it was the custom for practically the whole of the school to follow the same curriculum ; now, a pupil has the choice, even in schools of moderate size, of a variety of paths through the school. The extreme limit of the reaction from the rigid class-system is marked by the Dalton Plan, which attempts to make the individual boy or girl the unit of organisation rather than the class. To those who believe in the Dalton Plan there are no difficulties at all in the organisation of coeducation ; each individual is simply fitted up with the scheme of work most appropriate to him.

Many teachers, however, who believe in a wide measure of freedom for individual children hesitate to follow the Dalton Plan in its extreme form ; and it is significant that it has been modified considerably in England so as to allow of a combination of individual work and class teaching. It is possible to attach too much importance

to names ; and it is likely that when the Dalton Plan enthusiasts have moved a little further to the right, and the believers in class teaching have moved a little further to the left, they will be found camping on much the same ground. But it is certain that for many years to come, if the coeducational school is to be successful, it will have to show that it can provide the necessary elasticity within an organisation which is based mainly on the class as a unit. This chapter will assume the continuance of the class-system and show how it can be applied to a mixed school. If coeducation is practicable under that system then it can be carried out still more easily under any system which provides greater elasticity and more frequent opportunities for individual work.

It is obvious that the larger the school the greater variety of courses it will be able to provide. Thus one high school in America at present provides upon entrance for some eighty different courses to meet the needs, presumably, of some eighty different types of pupils ; though it is not easy to see how eighty different types of interests and abilities can be distinguished within the first month of a child's school career. But that is in a school of some 5,000 pupils. Under English conditions it is necessary for the coeducationist to show that sufficient variety can be provided in a school of less than one-

tenth of that size. If a mixed school falls much below 300 in numbers, really satisfactory organisation is difficult, as it always is in a small school. Some of the rural schools work under undoubted disadvantages in this respect ; and unless some of the money saved by building one school instead of two is given back to the school in the form of a more generous allowance of teachers, it is difficult to provide the variety of courses that should be provided. This, of course, is not an argument against coeducation ; it is an argument against having too small a school. To separate the boys and girls would make matters worse still.

Of the 361 mixed secondary schools in England and Wales, it is probable that no two have organisations which are identical in every respect. No more can be done here than to sketch an organisation typical of a school of 300 to 400 pupils and to examine how it meets the varying needs of boys and girls.

The arrangement outlined below is simply given as a "specimen," in order to illustrate how the differing needs of the sexes can be dovetailed into one time-table ; the experience of different schools leads them to start various optional subjects at different points in the course, and to offer quite different options in many cases. Even within the range of State-aided schools many interesting experiments are being

carried out and work of a pioneer character is being done ; and it is tempting to sketch an organisation which would bring out this point. But the purpose of the present chapter is to show how the *average* mixed school meets its problems. If the average school can solve the problems of coeducation, the exceptional school may be trusted to look after itself.

The organisation is to provide for entry at 11 plus, for a five-year course to the standard of the First School Certificate Examination at the age of 16 plus, and then for post-matriculation specialisation from the ages of 16 to 18 or 19.

Not very much differentiation between boys and girls is needed in the first two years of the course. Scripture, English, History, Geography, French, Mathematics, Music, Art can all be taken in mixed classes. The Sciences taken are Physics and Chemistry (in modifications of this scheme Chemistry is sometimes postponed until the second year). Not all girls or even all boys will study these two sciences throughout the course, but usually they all start with them. Elementary Physics is little more than Practical Mathematics, and a course in it is of special value to a girl who may find difficulty with Mathematics itself. And a preliminary course in Chemistry is necessary, both for the girl who will eventually take up Domestic Science, and for the girl (or boy) who will later study Botany. Classes



are therefore only separated into boys and girls for physical training and for Housecraft and Handicraft subjects. The girl usually takes Needlework while the boy takes Woodwork.

The Consultative Committee have suggested that an opportunity should be given to girls, should they have a taste for it, to learn Woodwork. It is clear that under the above arrangement a girl could take Woodwork easily enough if it was desirable. But to do so she would have either to overload her already full curriculum, or else to sacrifice some other subject, in this case Needlework ; and it is for this reason that the girl rarely does take Woodwork in mixed schools. There is also the practical difficulty of making a wise choice between options at the very beginning of the course, when tastes are unknown to the teaching staff and undeveloped. But the possibility of her doing so is there. It should be added that in the boarding schools of the Society of Friends, and in other schools too, girls often take up carpentry as a "leisure-hour pursuit," and do well in it.

At the beginning of the third year Botany appears as a third Science subject. Few schools can spare the time for three branches of Science to be studied concurrently by the same pupil, and the usual plan is to make the Botany alternative with the Physics. The great majority of boys continue their Physics ; but many girls

substitute Botany. The deciding factor should be aptitude ; and the school has by this time sufficient knowledge of the tastes, capacities, and often the future careers, of individuals to guide them in making the choice wisely. A girl with a taste for Mathematics will probably continue Physics ; a girl, on the other hand, with good powers of observation and description, but with a dislike of Mathematics, will probably substitute Botany.

A large girls' school will usually offer a similar option to girls ; a small one is rarely justified in doing so ; hence the girl in a mixed school does not lose, and may gain. But even a large boys' school is rarely able to provide a course in Botany, as so few boys require it ; so that the exceptional boy can be better catered for in a mixed school than elsewhere.

A further option arises at the beginning of the third year with the introduction of a second language. In what are known as " two language " schools the usual choice is between Latin and German. This alternative is common both in mixed schools and in separated ones. The choice in a coeducational school will be made, once more, on grounds of aptitude and probable future needs, and not on grounds of sex. Some schools, normally " two language " ones, introduce a third option here, the alternatives being Latin, German or some form of private study,

the aim being to relieve the pressure on a slower boy or girl ; and a coeducational school often finds this a useful way of relaxing the pressure on girls. In "one language" schools the normal option is Latin or some form of harder Mathematics, often Mechanics, again with a private study alternative. A girl with a bias towards Languages will take Latin ; a boy with a bias towards Science will take the alternative.

Special importance attaches to a wise choice in this case, since the choice will usually determine whether a pupil is to specialise later in Languages or in Science. The girls' school is usually "biased" towards Languages, the boys' school towards Science ; the mixed school must make provision for both biases at once.

If Latin is to be offered as a subject at the First School Examination, it will usually be necessary, unless much time is devoted to it, to begin it one year earlier than here described. But in practice it is very often not offered for examination until later.

In the third year, also, the Housecraft-Handicraft option changes its form, the girls taking the first year of a two-year course in Cookery while the boys continue a course in Woodwork or Metalwork.

A girl would not at this stage be able to take the Woodwork option ; but there would be no reason why, if there was any demand for it,

a boy who was already reasonably proficient in Woodwork should not take the course in Cookery. In practice, he rarely does.\* Cookery will never be popularised with boys unless, firstly, it is called Boy-Scout Cookery, thus making it a manly subject; and secondly, the boy is allowed to eat all the products of his labours immediately they issue from the oven. But the course is available for him if he requires it.

At this stage, also, some segregation may be necessary in Music, a matter which is easy enough to devise.

In the fourth and fifth years of the course a further option is provided, some girls replacing Chemistry by a two-year course in Domestic Science, the first year thus overlapping with the Cookery course. Others, again, may drop the Chemistry and utilise the time for private study.

Thus, even up to the standard of the First School Examination, that bottle-neck through which parents and the Board of Education, with doubtful wisdom, unite in insisting that all children shall pass, very considerable variation is possible. The girl, for instance, has had the choice of the following combinations of Science subjects :

- Physics and Chemistry ;
- Botany and Chemistry (with elementary Physics) ;

Physics and Domestic Science (with elementary Chemistry) ;

Botany and Domestic Science (with elementary Physics and Chemistry) ;

Physics (with elementary Chemistry) ;

Botany (with elementary Physics and Chemistry).

She has also, even if she omits Domestic Science as a subject, worked through a four-year course in Housecraft, including Needlework, Cookery and elementary Hygiene. And she has been able to devote special attention either to Languages, or to Science ; or else to work on a slightly restricted curriculum which includes a minimum only of either or both.

After the First School Examination is passed, specialisation takes place. It is arranged, once more, on grounds of aptitude alone. The course above described would usually terminate in two main groups of "advanced course" studies ; the one, Science and Mathematics ; the other, English, French, Latin and History, or a selection from these. Neither of these groupings need be completely rigid : thus, for example, out of twenty-four post-matriculation pupils in one school in 1927, there were eight slightly different combinations of subjects offered. An "advanced course" based on Geography could be offered as a third main group of subjects if a sufficient number of pupils desired it.

Once again, the same advantage of the mixed school emerges. A girls' school of 300 often concentrates on advanced work in Modern Studies; not sufficient girls are attracted to Science to make a separate course possible. And the boys' school of 300 often concentrates on advanced work in Science; not sufficient boys being attracted to Languages to make a separate course possible. But the mixed school of the same size will find both courses necessary; and so it meets the needs of both sexes impartially. The girl who is drawn to languages will be no worse off than in a girls' school; if she is drawn to Science she will probably be better off. The boy who specialises in Science will have equal facilities in either type of school; if he specialises in Languages the mixed school will probably help him more.

Larger schools, besides running Modern and Science Sides as described, will be able to add Classical Sides, or even Commercial courses to them. The organisation will become more complicated, but the same principles will apply, and the same advantage will emerge, that a wider choice of subjects will be available for all, and the exceptional boy or girl will reap special benefit.

Even the above simple form of organisation is capable of giving very considerable relief to

the girl who is in danger of overpressure. Such a girl can be helped in three ways.

(i) She may be placed in the lower of two or the lowest of three parallel forms, for all subjects, or for some subjects only if a set system is in force. She will be able to cover the examination syllabus, but she will concentrate more on essentials and will not acquire so detailed a knowledge of her subjects. She will be a "pass" candidate rather than a "distinction" one.

(ii) She may take an easier optional subject. Domestic Science, for instance, is for some girls an easier subject than Chemistry.

(iii) She may take rather fewer subjects; for example, she need not take up a second language or a second branch of Science. Or, after 15, her work in Mathematics may be restricted to Arithmetic.

In these ways it is possible very considerably to lighten her work. But very often it is entirely unnecessary. Some girls, unconscious of the strain they are alleged to be undergoing, will persist in taking all the subjects that boys take, and in studying them with obvious relish and enjoyment, remaining healthy, happy and vigorous all the while. They have not, of course, read any educational psychology, and they do not know what is expected of them. Doris, aged 16, was leaving the matriculation examina-

tion room last summer when she ran into a reverend schoolmaster. "Well, Doris," said he, "glad to have got your matriculation over at last?" "Rather," said Doris happily; "Mr X promised that he would let us do some Calculus when we had got the examination out of the way." Doris may be a little exceptional in her desire to differentiate, but the type of girl who works through a full secondary course easily enough and takes examinations in her stride is not at all exceptional. Not in a mixed school, at all events.

There is a further device of organisation enabling children to progress through a school at different rates, and of special value in a mixed school. That is the plan of having a "fast" and a "slow" course through the school to the first examination forms. The organisation sketched above allows five years to reach matriculation standard; a four-year course could be combined with it as well. (It will be understood that five years and four years are quoted for illustration merely; the actual length of time required depends on the standard of work of the entrants.) The boys and girls who are apparently cleverer are placed in the four-year course, but there is a possibility later of transferring them to the five-year course if they do not make the progress desired, or if they show signs of strain. As the girl develops rather more quickly than the boy



up to about 14 years of age, she usually has no difficulty in keeping level with him, and often excelling him, in the first two years of the "fast" course. If the pace of her development then slackens, or if she shows signs of overstrain, she can be transferred to the "slow" course and complete her work there; if she is obviously equal to the "fast" one, she can remain there and arrive at an examination form all the sooner. The arrangement is well adapted both for dealing with any difference there may be in the rates of development of the sexes, and for preventing overstrain. It has been tried in practice and would appear to be successful. The crucial point is the possibility of transference from the one course to the other without undue dislocation of work. To discuss the matter more fully would involve the introduction of much technical detail regarding syllabuses which would be foreign to the main purpose of this book. It may be said, however, that the transference is quite feasible provided that the organisation has foreseen its possibility and has adjusted its syllabuses and schemes of work accordingly.

It should be emphasised again that the above sketch is merely intended to be illustrative of the kind of arrangements it is possible to make in a mixed secondary school so as to meet the differing needs of boys and girls. The reader may

find that his favourite subject has received but scant attention, or has perhaps been omitted altogether. If so, it will be an interesting exercise for him to plan an organisation which does full justice to it. And if his particular subject is one the presentation of which to a mixed class involves special difficulties, then let him by all means arrange for the sexes to study it separately. There is nothing contrary to the ideals of coeducation in this. But it will be a curious curriculum if it involves segregation for as much as half the week.

Mixed elementary schools meet their simpler problems in similar ways. Thus a course in Woodwork for boys is often taken at the same time as a Domestic Science course for girls. Needlework for girls sometimes alternates with practical Mathematics for boys—a practice to which may be traced some of the difficulty experienced later by girls in doing Mathematics. In other schools Needlework for girls alternates with Drawing for boys. Sometimes Woodwork and Domestic Science alternate, and there is a further alternative of Needlework or some form of hand occupation (e.g. Leathercraft) for girls and an extended course of Scale-drawing for boys. In one rural central school Needlework at first alternates with Woodwork, and then a girls' course in Cookery and Hygiene is balanced by a boys' course in Gardening and Fruit

Culture. The variants are almost unlimited in number.

Summing up, therefore, the bearing of the problems of coeducation upon the organisation of teaching in the school, it appears that :

(1) Boys and girls can be separated for those subjects which are usually only studied by the one sex ;

(2) They can be given a wider choice of optional subjects than they could be given in separated schools ;

(3) Their curricula can show, if desirable, the same "biases" towards "Science" and "Arts" that they sometimes show in single-sex schools ;

(4) Their alleged differing rates of development can be met by running "fast" and "slow" courses throughout the school, and by treating boys and girls as individuals rather than as groups ;

(5) Overstrain on the part of the girl (or boy) can be met either by taking an easier optional subject, or by taking fewer subjects, or by working in a lower set, or by working through an  $(x+1)$  years' course instead of an  $x$  years' one. And perhaps one may add, by working in a friendly atmosphere which is not conducive to "strain" of any kind.

*(b) Out-of-School Activities*

Important though the teaching organisation of a school is, it is outside the classroom that the "imponderables" of education are to be found. For outside the classroom activities are nearly always voluntary; they are undertaken in an atmosphere of real freedom; and they contribute largely to the development of initiative, resource, the spirit of sportsmanship and comradeship; in a word, to the development of character. Coinstruction takes place in the classroom; coeducation has its best opportunities outside.

Arrangements have to be made to allow both segregation and association of the sexes. The object should be neither to separate nor to bring together, but to ensure that opportunities for both shall arise. The precise nature of the arrangements must inevitably depend on the special circumstances of each school; in practice, they depend very largely upon the nature of the school buildings. All mixed secondary schools have separate lavatories and cloakrooms for boys and girls; most of them, having developed from dual schools, have separate playgrounds too—a fact which has given needless distress to some earnest believers in coeducation, who have not seen that a forced association is

almost as undesirable as a forced isolation. Separate playgrounds are a convenience rather than otherwise, for they are often used for organised games, and the games of the sexes are always separate. There is not the smallest reason why boys should not see girls playing netball, or girls see boys playing football, if they want to ; and when school or house matches are in progress they usually do want to turn up and support their school or house. But there is every reason why they should not actually play together ; and the two playgrounds are thus in practice quite convenient. Moreover, the boy in his leisure time not only plays cricket and football ; he likes to work off his animal spirits ; he likes to indulge in a little ragging ; he likes, occasionally, to make matters warm for those of his friends who have incurred his displeasure. These are all, within limits, excellent characteristics, and he ought not to be deprived of an opportunity for developing them. But girls take their pleasures a little more sedately. Let both boys and girls, then, have opportunities for separation as well as for association.

If, however, there are separate playgrounds, it is essential to provide opportunities for association elsewhere. A central hall is an admirable meeting place for both sexes ; but usually boys and girls are allowed to mix freely in almost

all parts of the school buildings. One room is generally set apart for the undisturbed occupation of girls who may desire a little peace and quiet ; and often a silence room is reserved for all those, whether boys or girls, who want to read, write or perhaps play draughts or chess. If the school is fortunate enough to possess a library, this is the natural place to use for such a purpose. But, although one or two rooms may be thus reserved for special purposes, most of the buildings should be used impartially by boys and girls alike. Association, or rather opportunities for association, should be normal ; separation exceptional.

One form of out-of-school activity which has come very much to the fore in recent years, in all types of day schools, is the school journey. These journeys have, for many reasons, a great educational value. They help to strengthen a school's esprit de corps ; they bring staff and pupils into closer touch with each other than is possible under the ordinary conditions of school life. Continental journeys in particular bring some at least of the benefits of travel to children who might not normally have much chance of seeing any country other than their own. Such journeys not only encourage the study of a foreign language ; they throw useful light, in a variety of ways, upon the work of a school. And a journey is, finally, a good holiday ; and

there is much of educational value in a holiday pure and simple.

For all these reasons, school journeys are a valuable part of the activities of mixed schools also ; and for such schools they constitute a special test. For, with the holiday spirit "in the air," with many of the restrictions of school life removed, and with boys and girls together all day long, there is obviously a special opportunity for things to go wrong. Can the mixed school stand the test ? Can boys and girls avoid spoiling good comradeship by sentimentality ? Will they be able to "let off steam" harmlessly ? Or will they get out of hand : will things happen that in their calmer moments they would regret ?

Few of us would take abroad a mixed party of, say, fifty boys from a boys' school and fifty girls from a girls' school, without grave misgiving as to what would come of it. The sexes would either not mix at all, or else they would mix too much. But a party of boys and girls from a coeducational school ought to be able to conduct themselves properly under such conditions. Whether they are able to do so is a matter which only experience can decide. The writer can do no more than give an example from his own experience. He recently took a party of some eighty boys and girls to Brittany for a fortnight. They were normal boys and girls, certainly not angels ; but in the whole of the fortnight not

one single incident occurred that left an unpleasant taste behind. The sleeping accommodation of the girls was on a different floor of the hotel from that of the boys ; but otherwise there was no attempt to separate the sexes. They arranged themselves for meals just as they chose ; sometimes a group of boys (or girls) together, at other times mixed groups of boys and girls ; they made up their own rambling and excursion parties as they chose. Sometimes they were mixed parties ; sometimes not. If they wanted to separate, they did separate ; if they wanted to mix, they did mix. They danced together in the evenings ; they even upon occasion played a kind of cricket together on the sands. They talked together all day long, except when stern pedagogues demanded that they should speak French ; and then they were all silent together. They were seasick together in the Channel ; the gluttonous had indigestion together after dinner. In fact, they were allowed to have all things in common. But no vows of everlasting friendship were made ; no hearts were joined together in eternal bonds ; and no hearts were broken.

The other forms which co-operation can take outside the classroom are almost unlimited. Reference has already been made to one of them, the School Play ; it is one of the most useful and outstanding examples of a piece of work which



can only be well done if all pull together. There is also the Debating Society, an excellent clearing-house for different points of view ; there is the School Magazine, probably edited by the school prefects, both boys and girls ; the Form Magazine, which comes out periodically with a great flourish of trumpets and survives about two issues—often not long enough to get the serial story finished. In fact one suspects that the difficulty of finishing the serial is one of the reasons for its early demise. Some schools also have their Form Committees, charged with a variety of important duties—the care of the classroom, the preservation of a satisfactory standard of discipline in the form, the production of the Form Magazine, the selection of Form Representatives, the measures to be taken to keep the form's contribution to the Hospital Fund up to standard ; and so on. Boys and girls together can run all these things, and the more they are allowed to do so, without too much supervision by the staff, the better. They will come to the staff readily enough if in difficulties, and will appreciate the help they get. One form of twelve-year-olds recently passed a solemn resolution thanking their form mistress "for her hard work and assistance, which has been of the utmost value." But the guiding principle is to let them work out their own problems in their own way.

The question of out-of-school activities has been responsible for one of the more serious objections which have been made to coeducation. It was argued that when boys and girls were associated the boy dominated everything by his more forceful personality ; the initiative passed to him, and the girl took a back seat. She suffered the boy to take the lead in everything ; therefore, it was argued, it was only the separated school which could "bring out" the girl's latent powers. The girl needed special encouragement to undertake responsibility and to develop initiative. This point was once urged by Miss Maude Royden, who thought that girls would for the present develop faster if separated from boys, and that they were not at the moment ready for coeducation. Co-operation was desirable, but the mixed school would not secure it on equal terms. One witness before the Consultative Committee, making the same point, went so far as to say that the boys in general acted as a "depressing element" upon the girls.

In the earlier days of coeducation there seems to have been some truth in this. And probably it is still true that in some schools, at some periods, the girls may be overshadowed by the boys. But the position has altered very greatly ; as a general rule, the present experience is that girls are fully capable of holding their own outside the classroom.

And sometimes they hold their own in unexpected ways. At the swimming sports of one mixed secondary school the most sporting event of the day was quite spontaneous. At the end of the programme the head girl challenged the head boy to a race. The challenge was accepted and the contest took place amid the greatest excitement of parents, pupils and staff. The boy won by less than a yard—but there was no overshadowing here.

It is to be remembered, however, that in any given year there is always a tendency for the tone of a school to be set, and the activities to be run, by a small number of vigorous pupils. It seems quite accidental whether, in a mixed school which has provided equal opportunities for all, these happen to be boys or girls. It is personality that counts, not sex. There is on the whole little danger at the present moment that girls as a class will be overshadowed by boys. The position, however, admittedly requires watching, and the staff of a mixed school (like the staff of any other school) may sometimes have to devise special ways of encouraging the shy and retiring to take a larger share in the corporate life of the school.

A note may be added on two "out-of-school activities" which do not primarily concern the boys and girls themselves. A school which calls itself an educational family will not neglect the

real family ; it will establish all the contacts it possibly can with the homes of its pupils. This co-operation between the school and the home may, or may not, according to differing local circumstances, result in the formation of an officially recognised Parents' Association. Many mixed schools, however, have flourishing associations of this kind, where the school is able to get valuable knowledge of the behaviour at home of the boys and girls it is trying to teach, and thus come to understand them better ; and where the parents are able to come into closer touch with the point of view of the school and to realise more fully just what it is that the school is trying to do for their children. And the mixed school has also an exceptional opportunity of developing a strong Old Scholars' Association, which can organise gatherings to which both men and women can come and renew together the experiences of the past, and to which both husbands and wives of old scholars can naturally be admitted. In these two ways a school which is both a family and a social institution can make fruitful contact with that larger world of which it is an integral part, and which it is trying to serve.

### (c) *Discipline*

Something should be said about the question of discipline in a mixed school. But not very

much ; for it does not differ fundamentally from the question of discipline in any good modern school. The whole point of view has undergone radical changes in the last generation. The old view of discipline was that it was something exerted upon a boy or girl from without. And indeed some kind of external force was very necessary ; for having succeeded in making his pupils thoroughly uncomfortable by teaching them what they did not want to learn, and by adopting repressive methods on the smallest provocation, the schoolmaster of the last century made trouble inevitable ; and so his discipline had to be prepared beforehand to meet it. Was it not Mr Dooley who advised us, whenever we met a boy, to cuff his head ? For if he did not deserve it for what he was then doing, he either had deserved it in the immediate past, or would deserve it in the immediate future. Pains and penalties were necessary, because so much of school life was artificial in its character.

But the old view is slowly giving place to the modern one, that the only discipline which is of lasting value is the discipline which is exerted from within ; that the ideal to be aimed at is self-discipline, the control of an individual by himself rather than by his teacher. And as schools have gradually become freer and happier places, the need for discipline of the external kind has diminished. It has become less and less

necessary, because in all types of school the unnatural is giving place to the more natural. And this is particularly true of a coeducational school. The atmosphere is more friendly ; hence punishment becomes less frequent. It is the exceptional method of treatment, not the normal. Minor misdemeanours occur, but the serious offence is unusual. The problem of "keeping order" is reduced to more modest dimensions.

The organisation of no school, however, whether mixed or not, is completely natural. Too much can be made of the analogy between the school and the family. The coeducationist who says, "My school is like a large family ; and in a wisely run family breaches of discipline, and consequently punishments, only occur as exceptional cases," may be met with the reply, "Yes, but it is not only a large family ; it is also a small world ; that is one of the claims you make for it ; and the discipline of the world comes down, in the last resort, to a code of laws which is full of hard cases, to the police court, the prison and even to the scaffold. The educational scaffold is expulsion ; what is the prison ?" And though the coeducationist may reply that he is under no obligation to copy all the worst features of the world, he cannot fairly deny that "awkward cases" will arise even in a mixed school. How are they to be dealt with ? When self-discipline fails, what

kind of coercive discipline (if any) ought the mixed school to apply?

The one method of discipline which is sure to be unsuccessful in a mixed school is the old "tariff" method. The tariff method imposed a definite penalty for a definite offence. It enjoyed a brief popularity because of its supposed impartiality and fairness. It eliminated all possibility of favouritism. Also it saved the teacher a lot of trouble. And it saved the boy trouble too. If he forgot to do his homework, he got a hundred lines; if he was late for chapel, he got a caning. He knew exactly where he was; and so he was able to weigh up precisely beforehand the consequences of his misdeeds. He wanted to cut football practice; he knew the penalty. Was it worth it? Sometimes, of course, it was. It all depended on what he wanted to do instead. On the whole the tariff was quite popular with boys; it enabled them to dispose of all inconvenient moral questions of right and wrong. Morality hardly entered into the calculation at all, for the boy paid ready cash for his misdeeds, and we all have a right to enjoy what we have paid for. In a few schools, indeed, chiefly girls' boarding schools, it was literally true that ready cash was paid, the system reaching its culminating point of mathematical perfection and complete absurdity in the formulation of a tariff of fines. What could be more exact?

To spill the water at dinner-time cost one penny ; talking in class was worth threepence ; talking in the dormitories after lights were out, sixpence ; impudence to a mistress might cost as much as half a crown. An essay could be written on the incidental virtues of the system. Mary finds herself in unexpected possession of a shilling, for example ; observe the training in good judgment the system afforded. Shall she spend sixpence of it to-day and sixpence to-morrow, or shall she "blue" the whole of the sum in one crowded hour of glorious crime ? Or shall she exercise the virtue of prudence by putting threepence aside against an emergency—Miss Blank's German lesson to-morrow, for instance ? Higher virtues still the system encouraged : a public-spirited and unselfish girl could spend the whole of the sum in enabling four bosom friends to "have a go."

What produced the tariff system was a desire to be fair. What killed it was its obvious unfairness. Punishment should fit the individual and not the crime. "Treating people all alike really means treating no one according to his merits." And nowadays the tariff is rarely if ever employed for serious offences, and never ought to be employed for moral ones ; though it has some use, in a coeducational school and in other kinds of school, as a means of checking small misdemeanours of a non-moral kind.



The tariff system, even in its less extreme forms, is particularly undesirable in a mixed school. For boys and girls differ in their temperaments and hence in their sensibility to punishment. Punishments which are equal objectively may be utterly unequal subjectively. Girls, as a rule, are sensitive to reproof ; a little more than mere reproof is needed before some boys consider that a teacher is really serious. The boy, therefore, may need rather more vigorous handling than the girl. But then there are some girls, too, who need vigorous treatment, just as there are others, more highly strung, for whom such treatment would be totally wrong. The sexes differ so widely among themselves that it would be a mistake to stereotype two sorts of discipline, one for boys and one for girls. What is necessary is that children should be considered as individuals ; and a teacher who will not consider them as individuals will be out of place in a mixed school.

It does not follow, of course, that a teacher must never impose disciplinary restrictions upon a class as a whole, without reference to its individual members. If his natural powers of discipline are weak he may be obliged to. And if he finds it necessary to say to his class (for instance), "The next person to throw an inkpot at me will go to the Head," then, boy or girl, that person will have to go. It will then have

to be left to the Head to introduce such differentiation of treatment as may be necessary. But whether the offender be boy or girl, the offence will be treated as a serious one ; for damage to school inkpots must be stopped at any cost.

There is another practical difficulty which would await a mixed school which treated all alike ; the difficulty of equating the girls' punishments to the boys. For a mixed school does not rule out automatically the possibility of corporal punishment for boys ; and it would be a delicate problem for some one (say, the Consultative Committee) to assess the precise equivalent for the girl, of a thrashing for a boy. In America corporal punishment is unknown, but English coeducationists, as a class, have not urged its complete abolition in England. Mr Badley, for instance, regrets it, but thinks that there are stages of development in which it may be necessary ; and Messrs Grant and Hodgson go further : they thoroughly approve of it. The hearty English boy, they say, regards it " with respect, if not affection." It seems a shame, one supposes, to deprive him of it.

Corporal punishment for boys used to find favour as a " short cut." And so it may be—but not to heaven. We have moved far from the days in which Dr Keate was able to flog seventy-two boys in rapid succession ; corporal

punishment is now on the decline in England in all types of school. But it should be added that even some of those who disapprove of it in theory have been known to employ it in practice. The curate (with strong views on the subject) who, confronted with his Sunday school class, could only impart a knowledge of Scripture to them by banging the boys' heads with his Bible, is an example of the way in which theory will sometimes crack under strain.

If there is little corporal punishment now in boys' schools, there is still less in mixed schools; but, for those who believe in it, there is no objection to its use, in exceptional cases, in such schools. Punishment is relative to the individual; and if a schoolmaster thinks that Brown or Smith would be the better for a caning, there is really nothing to stop him from administering it—provided that he does not administer it *coram populo*. It is only if a caning became the standard punishment for a recognised class of offence, which might be committed by girls as well as by boys, that a coeducational school would find itself in difficulties.

In the last resort, discipline in any type of school depends largely on the personality of the teacher. If you can say, with Mr Noakley in *Joan and Peter*, "The boys, they seem to *mind* me somehow," the chances are that the girls will mind you too. If on the other hand you are

the type of teacher who is a target for inkpots, you will not solve your disciplinary difficulties by transferring your services to a mixed school ; for the girls can throw almost as hard and quite as straight as the boys. It would be better for you to retire from active service altogether, and to devote your leisure to writing your memoirs. If you will only tell the whole truth in them you will be certain to write an amusing book.

#### (d) *Staffing*

It is a commonplace among organisers of education to say that all teachers on the staff of a coeducational school must be persons of irreproachable moral character. And it is a very annoying commonplace, too ; because if the statement has a special meaning for a mixed school, it implies that a boys' school or a girls' school need not be quite so particular about the morals of the teachers it employs. The implication is that a teacher whose morals are, so to speak, seventy-five per cent. sound will do all right for boys alone or for girls alone. And so he may "do," for them, in another sense of the word. Obviously the truth is that there is no place for him in the teaching profession at all.

The statement, however, is sometimes made in a less extreme form. A teacher who is sound

on the great moral issues may still have certain small defects of character which unfit him, or her, for a coeducational school. He may be, it is said, unduly susceptible to hero-worship (or heroine-worship); and alarming pictures have been drawn, by people with more imagination than knowledge, of the subtle dangers which lurk in a mixed school: the man teacher who is always pestered with flowers and other gifts by the girls; the woman teacher with whom the older boys all fall in love. These dangers have been analysed, by outsiders, with some acuteness and much perseverance. Either, it is said, the man will be forced to stand aloof, to maintain an impenetrable reserve (in which case the advantages of free association between staff and pupils will be lost), or, if he is susceptible to flattery, he will consciously or unconsciously encourage the attentions of the girls, who will be able to "twist him round their little fingers," and with whom he will not be nearly strict enough.

This question of the relationship between staff and pupils is one of the great paper problems of coeducation, and much ink has been spilt discussing it. One is reminded of the story of the King who asked his savants why it was that, when a fish was placed in a bucket of water, the weight of the bucket and contents was not increased. All the savants had ingenious theories; none of them thought of weighing the

bucket. This problem of the sentimental attractions of children for members of the staff can only be solved by weighing the bucket. In other words, the solution must be sought within the walls of the school rather than in the pages of any book. The answer returned by the school is that these attachments, like the report of Mark Twain's death, are "greatly exaggerated." The whole tone and atmosphere of the school discourages them. It is probable that there are actually fewer of them than there are of the corresponding attractions for a mistress in a girls' school; the assertion has been made again and again by women with experience in both types of school. No doubt, of course, a large number could be found by any observer who mistook ordinary friendliness for an "attachment"—there are some people with a gift for seeing "attachments" everywhere. The writer, possibly because he lacks the gift, can only recall four such attachments in as many years. Distributed among a staff of seventeen teachers, this works out at a yearly average of one seventeenth of an attachment apiece. And the only one which was at all persistent was, curiously enough, that of a girl for a mistress. Nevertheless, although the number is exaggerated, they do occur from time to time. And for that reason a mixed school should be staffed by healthy-minded men and women who know

how to discourage without snubbing ; who will not pander to sentiment, but who can deflect it into other and more useful channels.

It is urged, again, that unusual gifts are needed for the teacher in a mixed school. He must have especial perception, insight into his pupils' difficulties, and much sympathy with them. He must be willing to follow up everything from the pupils' end ; that is, in a mixed school, from widely varying ends. Of course he must have these qualities. But these are characteristics of all good teachers. The stereotyped teacher, with one way of delivering one lesson, with his idea that to-day will repeat yesterday, is not of much use anywhere. No doubt he exists. The irrepressible Mr Bent had him in mind when he spoke of experience being the smoke on one's glasses. To make a success of teaching either sex separately, a teacher has to be a good practical psychologist. If he is not, then it were better for his pupils, and probably for him too, that he should go to sweep a crossing. If he is, then he will find that the problem of teaching boys and girls together is different in degree only, and not in kind, from the problem of teaching either sex separately. .

The Consultative Committee found a general agreement among its witnesses that to teach boys and girls together required "a wider outlook upon life." One wonders if they

realised what a condemnation this implies of the separated school. No one can reap the richest fruits of teaching without a wide outlook upon life. He can be a competent instructor without it ; a very different and inferior thing. The real difference is that a man (or woman) without a wide outlook is soon discovered to be wanting in a mixed school, where so many different points of view abound ; in a single-sex school he is more easily able to narrow the minds of his pupils without anyone being conscious of what is happening.

Married teachers are perhaps specially valuable on the staff of a mixed school—not for the quaint reason sometimes given that their pupils will be less likely to fall in love with them, or they with their pupils, but because they have had a wider experience of life, and sometimes understand more easily the needs and difficulties of both boys and girls. And the married mistress is as valuable as the married master. It is unfortunate for girls' schools, and doubly unfortunate for mixed ones, that some committees make a practice of requiring their women teachers to resign their appointments upon marriage. Those who oppose this policy argue (1) that there is a great waste to the country involved in losing teachers who have had a few years of teaching experience, and are probably only then developing their maximum efficiency ; (2) that there is a danger



that the best women will not enter a profession which, unlike medicine, law or commerce, has automatically to be abandoned on marriage ; (3) that the teaching of girls, most of whom will marry later, ought not to be *wholly* in the hands of women who have never been married themselves ; (4) that it is unfair to the childless married woman that she should be debarred from an occupation which may be engrossing to her and useful to other people ; (5) that public bodies have no right to interfere in the private affairs of a teacher so long as she performs her public duties efficiently. Those who support the policy base their case on social and economic considerations rather than on educational ones. The question is no doubt complicated enough ; one must be content here with urging that the restriction on the employment of married women teachers is a special handicap to a mixed school.

To argue that a successful teacher in a boys' or girls' school will also be a successful teacher in a mixed one is, however, to take too extreme a view. There are undoubted differences between boys and girls on the temperamental level ; and a teacher who may understand most boys may be less successful in grasping the attitude of girls. One may doubt whether, even here, the qualities required by a teacher in a mixed school are different in kind from the

qualities required by a teacher in a single-sex one. Perhaps if a woman could really claim to understand all types of girl she would understand all types of boy too. But women rarely do understand all types of girl; just as men rarely understand all types of boy. "Brown's a funny little beggar; unusual; I don't understand him," is a remark which has been heard before now in the common room of a boys' school. And so the master dismisses Brown from his thoughts. What he doesn't understand, of course, isn't worth understanding. That type of master, and the corresponding type of mistress, would find in a mixed school rather more that would puzzle them.

Because of these differences in temperament, a classroom "manner" which may seem to be well suited to the majority of boys may fail badly before a mixed class. There is a breezy, rather rough, cheerfully brutal kind of attitude which "goes down" well with some boys; it could not be applied to the more sensitive girl. "You can't help being ugly, Jones (though you might improve your face by washing it more frequently), but at least you might refrain from thrusting it in the limelight so often." Or, "If you want to take your meals standing for the next week, Smith, I daresay I shall be able to oblige you." Delicate repartee of this nature would be out of place in a mixed school.

Just how much the mixed school loses by its omission must be left for the reader to determine.

But it is easy to magnify these differences. The qualities which make a successful disciplinarian with a mixed class—a sense of proportion, good humour, fairness and firmness—are just the qualities which are needed by teachers everywhere.

In one respect, however, and a vital one, the mixed school teacher is sharply differentiated from others. He needs to be loyal to coeducation. The basic principle of a coeducational school is that boys and girls have an equal right to be in it. They may, or may not, differ widely from each other in their interests, their outlooks, their needs and their functions in after life; but although they are not identical, they are not members of a “superior” or “inferior” sex. And a teacher with strong feelings of sex-superiority cannot do his best work in a coeducational school. For his feelings will bias him (or her); and bias has no place in a mixed school. It has been said of the poor that their purpose in the scheme of things is to keep the rest of us charitable: which seems a little hard on the poor. There is a type of man whose view of woman is that her function in nature is to make him comfortable; just as there is a type of woman whose view of man is that he was created to

ensure that she should be comfortably off. Neither type of teacher will add to the efficiency, or the harmony, of a mixed school. For their attitudes will vitiate the whole basis on which the school rests.

Some good judges, looking at the position from the outside, have thought that this difficulty of getting teachers free from feelings of sex-superiority would be the rock on which coeducation would founder. It is possible that it may prevent a very large immediate increase in the number of mixed schools. For there is no doubt that sex-superiority is widespread outside the school doors. It is what one would expect in a world which has not been coeducated. At bottom it is little more than an unconscious form of self-conceit.

A clergyman at the Church Congress of 1927 opposed the admission of women to the priesthood on the curious ground that "God is masculine," and therefore could only be represented by a man. He may stand as the type of intellect unfitted for work in a mixed school. But the coeducational schools, naturally, do not attract these extreme types; and it is a fact that men and women holding more rational views can, and do, co-operate easily and naturally on the staffs of such schools. Those who have seen, as the writer has seen, men and women working together harmoniously and loyally, willing to give

help to anyone who needs it, willing to take help from anyone who will give it, caring nothing for questions of precedence or seniority or sex, anxious only to make a success of their work, know that co-operation between men and women is both possible and fruitful.

The superior man and the superior woman do exist ; but the mixed school will avoid them as it would avoid poison. And indeed they are poison, in the world of the twentieth century.

But it may be asked : Is there not a fundamental clash of interest between the man teacher and the woman teacher ? Does not the rise of one imply the decline of the other ? Are they not, putting it crudely, competitors for the same job ? There need not be, and there ought not to be, any such clash ; teachers of both sexes are needed, in equal numbers, on the staff of a mixed school. Coeducation can no more be fully successful without the man teacher than it can be without the woman teacher. But the woman teacher is cheaper ; and anyone who knows how much the development of coeducation in England has been at the mercy of considerations of convenience and economy will be obliged to admit a possible danger that administrators will be tempted to economise by replacing men by women. It will be against the interests of coeducation ; it will be fought by all those who care for mixed

schools ; but no one can dismiss the possibility. The teaching profession will have to throw all its influence into the scales against it, if it should come ; and the real objection to the activities of a small number of men teachers at the present moment, who are trying to debar women from all positions of serious responsibility in the mixed schools, is that they are taking up so untenable a position in this respect that they are likely to lose all weight when they come to fight the legitimate and important battle of the equal numbers of men and women on the staff.

One more practical point should be added. The staff arrangements of the mixed school should be such as to make co-operation and consultation easy. The ideal would seem to be a large joint common room, with separate smaller rooms for masters and for mistresses. Unfortunately many mixed secondary schools are housed in buildings which were originally constructed for the purposes of a dual school, so that men and women have no place for meeting and find consultation in practice very difficult. Opportunities have deliberately to be made ; they do not offer themselves naturally ; and this lack of facilities for informal interchange of opinion is a definite handicap. There is a risk that a man's common room and a woman's common room, lacking consultation, may develop divergent points of view which could easily have

been harmonised by informal discussion at an earlier stage.

One of the dangers to which teachers know themselves to be particularly liable, in any type of school, is that of "getting into a rut." It is a danger not entirely peculiar to the teaching profession. It is found in all walks of life. It has even been heard of in the Civil Service. To counteract it, schoolmasters might play golf (if they can borrow the money for it); stock-brokers might read Cicero; and politicians might go to church on Sundays. It happens naturally enough. There is no one of us who has not a desire at times for the companionship of those who understand him best, whose problems are the same as his own; people to whom one can talk without effort if one is tired; people, that is to say, of one's own experience, profession, age and sex. They are less likely to disagree with our *obiter dicta*; they give us a comfortable sense that we are right. And it is just that excess of association with people of our own profession, age and sex which gets us "into a rut." Which is bad for us, worse (if we are men) for our wives and worst of all for our pupils. A common room of one sex which is a mixture of all ages is less likely to get into a rut than one composed exclusively of old or young people; a common room which is a mixture of sexes as well as ages is least likely of all.

(e) *The Senior Mistress*

One member of the staff, the Senior Mistress, is so important that she requires a separate section. Her moral status ought to be coequal with that of the Head himself. If he is the father of the educational family, she is the mother. Her legal status cannot be quite equal, since divided responsibility is certainly unwise. In a mixed school, as elsewhere, two heads are better than one ; but two Heads are worse. But the Senior Mistress should certainly be second in command and should take charge of the school in the Head's absence, and her position should more nearly approach equality with his than the position of Second Master or Second Mistress in a separated school.

The most important function of the Senior Mistress is to advise the Head on matters specially affecting the interests of the girls, and to deal with any matters concerning them which may be most tactfully and effectively dealt with by a member of their own sex. She will probably have entire charge of matters affecting their health. She will, for instance, keep a special watch for signs of overstrain in girls ; and it should be added that a good Senior Mistress will often be able to give timely information about the health of the boys as well. This



applies indeed to the mistresses as a whole ; women often observe small details more quickly than the best-intentioned of men.

The Senior Mistress will also be responsible for such things as the supervision of the girls' cloakrooms, changing-rooms and lavatories ; and it is sometimes said that she ought to assume responsibility for the organisation of the girls' athletic and other clubs. There is no reason, however, why this duty should devolve on her if there are other mistresses capable of doing it, and with more leisure for the work.

The Head normally interviews mothers of girls who come to see him about their daughters' work ; but it will sometimes be more appropriate for the Senior Mistress to interview them, and they should always have an opportunity of consulting her if they so desire. No difficulties will arise if the Head and the Senior Mistress keep in close touch with one another and act, as they should act, in consultation. Consultation between them should be frequent, and there will be few matters affecting the general organisation of the school on which the Head will not desire the opinion of the Senior Mistress.

The Head will probably deal directly with all the prefects, making for the most part no distinction between boys and girls ; but the girl prefects will be encouraged to talk over some of their difficulties with the Senior Mistress. She must

have her own room where she can be approached by any of the prefects, or any of the girls, who desire to see her ; and she must have unrestricted access to any of the girls whom she desires to see. If she wishes, for any reason, to have an assembly of all the girls in the school apart from the boys, the necessary facilities must be given her.

It is the Head's duty to acquaint himself, as far as any one person can acquaint himself, with the various openings which commerce and industry, as well as the professions, have to offer to his pupils ; and he must study the position from the point of view of the girl as well as from that of the boy. This is a duty he cannot entirely delegate to the Senior Mistress, since it is a question which may affect the curriculum, and therefore the whole organisation, of the school. But in view of the increasing complexity of business organisation, and the rapidly changing conditions, many Heads of boys' schools are assisted by Careers Masters, who relieve them of some of the details of the work ; and a mixed school which has a Careers Master for boys will naturally have a Careers Mistress for girls too. If it can be arranged that the Senior Mistress acts in this capacity, it will make for smoothness of working, and will give her still more frequent opportunities of coming into close contact with the older girls.

Some of the matters to be discussed between

the Head and the Senior Mistress are matters of some little delicacy ; so much so, that some observers have doubted whether they ever can be satisfactorily discussed unless the persons concerned are husband and wife ; and this is usually impracticable. The Consultative Committee, for example, quoted the opinion of one woman witness that any discussion between them on the question of " attachments " is difficult. With the wrong relations between the Head and the Senior Mistress the point would be a valid one ; given the right relations, discussion is possible enough. Frankness is all that is necessary. There are three ways of referring to a spade. It may be called " an agricultural implement for the tilling of the soil " ; in which case it may be confused with a rake. It may be called, as in the well-known story, " a bally shovel " ; which is unnecessarily coarse. Or it may be called a spade. The Victorians had a tendency to speak of the agricultural implement ; a few Georgians delight in referring to " bally shovels." The Head and the Senior Mistress must call a spade a spade ; if either of them hesitates to do so, it is a sign that he or she is unfit for the duties of the position.

The existence of a good understanding between the Head of a school and the Senior Mistress is perhaps the biggest single factor in the success of a mixed school. It is vital to

complete success ; and two persons of ordinary capacity, acting as Head and Senior Mistress respectively of a mixed school, who° enjoy good relations with each other, are more likely to be successful than two more brilliant people who are not in sympathy with each other's ideals, and who have not the knack of pulling together. As much care should be exercised in the appointment of the Senior Mistress of a school as in the appointment of the Head himself. Her position is one, the exact limits of responsibility of which it is difficult to define clearly ; everything, therefore, depends on her capacity to co-operate with the Head, and the Head's capacity to co-operate with her. And to co-operate on equal terms. Of her, above all, it is necessary that she should be loyal to coeducation.

Some Education Committees have attempted to define in writing their view of the position and functions of the Senior Mistress. But however carefully their regulations are drafted, they cannot catch and embody that harmony of outlook upon which the success of the school depends. And it is doubtful whether such regulations are of any use. Given the right spirit, they are unnecessary ; given the wrong spirit, they are futile. A Head, or a Senior Mistress, who has to look at printed instructions in order to determine what is the correct professional attitude in any given set of circumstances, may

be written down as a person who is already lost. No mere regulations can save a school in which the higher command is divided against itself. Moreover, unless very carefully drafted, such regulations may be worse than futile ; they may be actually dangerous. For they may be interpreted as creating for the Senior Mistress a position which is independent of the Head Master's ; and that is in the interest of neither, and certainly not in the interest of the school itself. It is against the whole spirit of a mixed school, which should be an organic unity, not a clash of two conflicting interests.

The status of the Senior Mistress ought to be reflected in her salary. But it rarely is. The old arrangement in England was that she was paid the salary of an ordinary assistant mistress, with an addition of £38 per annum. The amount was in no way commensurate with her responsibilities. Under the new regulations the amount is not definitely fixed ; but the old figure of £38 often persists, and authorities which pay as much as £50 are considered quite generous. The difficulty is that this additional remuneration has to be taken out of a fixed sum of money known as the " Burnham Pool," so that the Senior Mistress can only be paid more at the cost of paying some other teacher less. It is greatly to be regretted that a much larger sum, say £100 per annum, could not be provided for

the office of Senior Mistress from some source other than the Pool. Such an allowance would be commensurate with the responsibility that a Senior Mistress is required to take. It would be an act of justice to individuals ; but it would be more than that. It would very definitely enhance the attractiveness of the office in the eyes of women teachers ; it would draw more of the best women teachers to mixed schools, and keep them there once they were attracted. The office of Senior Mistress would be a career in itself ; its holder would not be under a strong financial incentive, as at present, to apply for the headship of a girls' school. At the present moment there are numbers of good women, who might be admirably qualified for work in a mixed school, who prefer not to undertake it because they see no chance of its leading to a really responsible position. Coeducation will gain greatly in strength and in influence if it can get them. That it does, even at the present time, enlist the services of some of the best women in the profession no one knows better than the Head of a mixed school. Such women serve coeducation because they believe in it ; they make the sacrifice of their own ambitions willingly. But coeducation ought not to take advantage of people who look on their work as a vocation rather than a profession.

*(f) Women Heads*

It is scarcely possible to write of the relations between the Head of a school and his Senior Mistress, and to ignore the possibility that the Head may be a woman and the Senior Assistant a man.

This possibility may raise in the mind of the reader, if he be a man, many disconcerting queries. Would boys really "respect" a woman Head? Would public opinion support her? Would men teachers serve under her? Would boys remain at school until 18? Would the discipline of the school be satisfactory? And if the reader be a woman, she may perhaps wonder why anyone should be disconcerted at the idea at all. Why, she may ask, should a woman not be as successful as a man—assuming, that is, that she is energetic, tactful and generally in possession of those virtues which (as we all know) characterise men Heads? Why subject her claims to a special scrutiny? The reason is simply that men Heads are already in existence; there has been experience of them; but the woman Head, at least so far as post-primary schools are concerned, is comparatively unknown. She must expect, therefore, to face a certain amount of criticism.

To some of these queries it is easy to find an

answer. No doubt many boys would begin by disliking a woman Head. They are essentially conservative ; they hate new ideas as much as most of their elders hate them. But that is hardly an adequate reason for never introducing any new ideas. The point which is of real importance is this : what would their attitude be to a woman Head when they had become accustomed to her ?

One hopes that they would become as loyal to her as most girls are at present to a man Head. There is some ground for thinking that they would. Excellent relations exist at present, in the large majority of schools, between the mistresses and the older boys. But whether there would be, in the last resort, any feeling of "indignity" in being under the complete control of a woman depends upon the attitude of the boy to women generally ; and though this is partly determined by the school, it is also partly determined by the home. If there is an obvious lack of sex-equality at home, then corresponding difficulties may arise at school.

Thinking over the problems raised by the question of women Heads, the writer thought that it would be interesting to see how the experiment of a woman Head worked out in practice. For women Heads of mixed schools actually exist. Indeed, even apart from infants' schools, which are invariably in the charge of



women, there are almost as many mixed elementary schools controlled by women as there are controlled by men. In 1926 the headships of mixed elementary schools in England and Wales were divided between men and women as follows : junior mixed schools, 124 men, 1,479 women ; mixed schools proper, 8,778 men, 5,904 women ; senior mixed schools, 247 men, 3 women. Of the 361 mixed secondary schools, however, only 4 were completely under the control of women Heads.

“Senior mixed” schools keep boys and girls up to 14 and even 15 years of age, and it has generally been considered (by men) that such schools, like secondary schools, should not be under the control of women. But one or two of the women in charge of these schools were appointed by a committee as part of a definite experiment, and the experiment seems to be successful.

The writer visited one of these senior mixed elementary schools in 1927. It may be called school A. So far as he could see, everything was working easily and smoothly. The boys were a sturdy-looking set of youngsters with no trace of effeminacy about them (they had, in fact, a flourishing boxing club, run by an enthusiastic junior master) ; the discipline was excellent ; and the common room was a cheerful, pleasant place, the members of which, men and

women, were on the best of terms with one another. The Head said that she owed a good deal to her Senior Master, who was obviously loyal to her and devoted to the interests of the school. No one who saw that school could doubt that, given the right woman and the right staff, it is possible for a woman to control a mixed elementary school with complete success.

And yet another Education Committee reported in 1927 that "the best men will not serve under women, and the best women will not serve under men." For the credit of the Committee, one hopes that the word "best" was a misprint for "worst."

It is, however, in the secondary school that the woman Head is likely to meet with the strongest opposition of all; and some notes are therefore given of two of the secondary schools which have women Heads—or had when the writer visited them.

School B is a school of 225 pupils, containing 90 boys and 135 girls, and staffed by a Head Mistress, a Senior Assistant Mistress, four full-time masters and five full-time mistresses, a visiting master and a visiting mistress. There is no officially recognised "Senior Assistant Master."

The school started as a Pupil Teachers' Centre with a small number of boys and girls. It

was so successful, however, and grew so rapidly that some years ago it was recognised by the Board of Education as an efficient secondary school. It was natural that the woman who had built up the school from a handful of pupils should be retained in charge of it.

Considerable prejudice against the school existed in the early years on the part of parents of boys ; and still more, apparently, on the part of the heads of neighbouring elementary schools. To avoid attending it, boys would take train journeys of several miles to other towns. But prejudice was gradually overcome, as it became obvious to the neighbourhood that the school was "delivering the goods" ; and for the last three years there have been as many boys applying for admission as girls. It should be mentioned that one factor in increasing the popularity of the school was the observation of residents in the neighbourhood that the out-of-school behaviour of both boys and girls was better than that of those attending separate schools elsewhere. For this fact, which will not surprise those conversant with mixed schools, the writer has evidence independent of the testimony of the Head Mistress.

The school is now said to be enthusiastically supported by the parents, and the fathers of boy pupils seem to be quite loyal to the school and to the Head Mistress.

The masters and mistresses, by preference, have a joint common room. It would have been possible to have found separate rooms. But they did not want them. One term there arrived at the school some young student teachers, straining the capacity of the staff room to the utmost; also, they seem to have been heavy smokers, after the manner of young men only recently promoted from cigarettes to pipes. So the Head Mistress suggested a separate room for the men, where they could all smoke to their hearts' content. But the permanent staff objected. So they retained their joint room, and now the heavy smokers retire either to the gardens or to the science room, where nicotine can mingle unobtrusively with still more pungent odours.

The discipline appears to be good. There is a weekly detention, for the lazy rather than the disobedient, and habitual offenders have to take home a note explaining the reason for their detention. Of other punishments there is none. Occasionally a boy or girl is "reported" to the Head Mistress. What she says on these occasions is a sacred mystery; but the culprit rarely appears again. And that is one object aimed at in all punishment.

One objection to women Heads is answered clearly by the experience of this school. The older boys do remain at school—there is no tendency for them to leave as soon as possible.

There is a VIth form of nineteen at the moment, about equally divided between boys and girls.

The Head Mistress has not had a single case of nervous breakdown on the part of girls. She does not see why she ever should have. She ascribes the freedom from emotionalism to the games, which seem to be very vigorously played both by boys and by girls. The games are now quite separate, except for occasional tennis. Mixed hockey was once played, but abandoned, for reasons similar to the reasons which caused its abandonment at Bedales.

According to the Head Mistress, "flirtations" are almost non-existent, except when a boy is admitted to the school at a rather late age, say 14 or 15. In such cases, she says, there is sometimes a little temporary fluttering of hearts. For this reason, as well as for educational reasons, she does not care to accept boys later than 12 years of age. But her view is that it is always the girl who "begins it"—a view which the writer records without comment. Boys who enter the school late are usually amused at the idea of a woman Head, rather than indignant, but they soon settle down to regard it as natural enough.

This Head Mistress was emphatic as to the much larger number of "grandes passions" (her own phrase) which are to be found in a girls' school. She, and her women colleagues,

greatly preferred teaching in a mixed school ; partly because they were free from these embarrassing attentions, partly because the girls in mixed schools were "so much less affected." Women teachers sometimes stress the special benefits of coeducation for boys ; men teachers its special benefits for girls. The reader, if he thinks hard enough, will no doubt be able to discover the reason for this. It was pleasant to find, in this particular school, such frank recognition on the part of the women teachers of the advantages which coeducation had brought to girls.

School C has also developed into a fully fledged secondary school from a pupil teachers' centre. In 1913 it had 26 pupils, boys and girls. Partly owing to the lack of adequate facilities for secondary education in the neighbourhood, and partly also, no doubt, to the enthusiasm of an exceedingly competent and well-qualified woman Head, its numbers grew very rapidly. By 1921, when it attained secondary school status, it had grown to 155 ; in 1927 its numbers were 217, composed of 119 boys and 98 girls. It cannot take any more pupils, though many more want to come.

As the boys actually predominate in this school, it is clear that the woman Head has not frightened them away. Moreover, they remain, in good numbers, for the post-

matriculation work. Half the VIth Form are boys, rather more on the Science side than on the Arts; advanced work is done in both groups of subjects. Although the Head is herself an Arts specialist, there does not seem to be any special bias towards the Arts side. And the boys and girls not only remain for post-matriculation work, they do well in it; and in spite of certain handicaps (many of the pupils have long train journeys, and the science equipment is inadequate), they succeed in gaining their fair proportion of examination successes and even win open scholarships.

There are five full-time masters, four full-time mistresses, two part-time mistresses, and one part-time master. There are separate common rooms, placed side by side, and consultation between men and women teachers is frequent.

One master is definitely recognised as Senior Assistant Master, and his position seems to be one of real responsibility. The discipline of the school appears to a visitor to be excellent; but if "awkward cases" arise among boys, and the Head and the Senior Master feel that drastic action is called for, of a kind for which a woman Head is unsuitable, then the Senior Master provides the necessary "man's hand." This apparently is a very infrequent occurrence, but it is one from which no one shrinks if

necessary. Except possibly the culprit; his opinion was not expressed.

The school being in charge of a woman Head, the reader will not suspect that the interests of the girls are neglected. But so far as the writer could see, the needs and interests of the boys also were properly catered for. On the sports notice-board he saw the list of football fixtures for the term and the results of the games played. Fixtures were arranged with well-known secondary schools in the neighbourhood, all of them much larger institutions; but in the last five matches the school had scored 25 goals to their opponents' 9. And in the last "Inter-County" sports, where the school was in competition with big schools drawn from a very wide area, it had carried off two championship cups and several medals. The writer, who was allowed to wander about at will, unaccompanied, in and out of classrooms and about the grounds and playing fields, hunted everywhere for the "effeminate boy"; but he could not find him. But he must admit that two boys whom he saw later on the station platform politely raised their caps to him; there are some who will call this "effeminacy."

One or two interesting points transpired in conversation with the Head Mistress. She occasionally suspects overstrain on the part of girls; but she attributes it solely to the fatigue



consequent upon travelling long distances each day, and does not think that it is in any way connected with the presence of boys in the school. And, although she also has occasionally seen traces of "grandes passions," she is confident that the school is much freer of them than the average girls' school.

These two schools seem to be thoroughly successful. It is true enough, of course, that accidental circumstances have favoured their growth, and that many parents would doubtless have sent their sons to a school with a man Head if such a school had been easily accessible. But the point is that the women Heads were able to seize their opportunity and "make good," and have thus shown that it is perfectly possible for a woman to control a mixed secondary school successfully when she is given the chance of doing so.

There appears to be no reason in theory why a woman should not be Head of a mixed school, provided that she is supported by a Senior Master who has real responsibility, and that she is willing to hand over occasional matters to him. This is no more than the corollary of the statement, universally admitted, that a Head Master should be supported by a strong Senior Mistress, and should give her wide discretionary powers in dealing with girls. Given a willingness to co-operate, there is no special difficulty

in this. Does either the father of a family or the mother elect to deal with any and every difficulty in the home? Matters occasionally arise, in connection with either boys or girls, which are best dealt with by members of their own sex; a sense of proportion ought to prevent such matters being magnified into serious obstacles to coeducation.

There is, also, no reason in practice why a woman should not control a mixed school successfully, provided that men can be found who are ready to serve under her. If they cannot be found, that is a reflection upon men rather than upon women. But it is clear that many good men are willing; and the better the men, the more willing they will be.

The real difficulty about the appointment of women to headships is the difficulty of public opinion. It may be doubted whether parents are ready as yet for the woman Head. Many parents, though not all, are willing to hand over their daughters, as they put it, to the care of a man; there are not nearly as many who are willing to hand over their sons to the care of a woman. But a parent who sends his children to a mixed school is not handing them over to the care of a man, or a woman; he is handing them over to the care of men and women. When he can be got to think of the matter in this way his reluctance may disappear.

The parent does not realise that the policy, tone and whole outlook of a school now depends less exclusively upon one person than used to be the case. Some centuries ago the Head Master of Westminster asked for permission to keep his head covered in the presence of his King ; it would not do, he said, for the scholars to think that there was anyone in the world more important than their Head Master. He was an autocratic gentleman. And even in much more recent times the head of a school has often enjoyed almost despotic power. He "bestrode his narrow world like a Colossus"; he stamped his personality on the school—which was bad for the school even if his personality was good. He informed his colleagues of his decisions, rather than consulted them as to what his decisions should be. He was the winner in the educational race ; his colleagues, at the best, "also ran"—though it was so obvious that he meant to be first past the winning post that very often his colleagues did not trouble to run at all. But all that has changed, or is changing. The Head of a school is not the only person in it who counts ; he is one of many, even although he is the most important person ; and though he will sometimes, if he is to do his job properly, have to make decisions contrary to the wishes of his colleagues, he hears all sides and takes all points of view into account. So

that the sex of the Head of a mixed school is not really so vital a point as it would have been even twenty years ago. The Head, whether man or woman, will only act with knowledge of both the man's and woman's point of view.

Those who desire to see an increase in the number and influence of coeducational schools and who yet want to see full justice done to the claims of women will welcome the advent of women Heads in a few cases where local conditions are favourable ; but as an interim measure they will be content with something less heroic than a large increase in the number of such Heads. For women Heads can never be fully successful, and therefore they can only do harm to coeducation, unless they are supported in the first instance by public opinion, or unless public opinion, after experience of their value, can be persuaded to support them. Public opinion at the moment, in many areas, is not opposed to the idea of a woman Head of a mixed elementary school ; and therefore one may expect the number of such Heads to be increased. But it is only gradually that it is likely to become favourable to the idea of a woman Head of a mixed post-primary school. That it will gradually become favourable is a matter which seems probable enough. There are many causes which will bring about a change in attitude. There are those social and political tendencies

which will result in a further raising of the general status of women ; there will be the example of 'successful women Heads in those areas which have tried them ; and there will be the growing realisation that a mixed school is run neither by men, nor by women, but by men and women working in close co-operation with each other.

## CHAPTER IX

### OBJECTIONS

IN the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to deal with those objections to coeducation which arise naturally out of the positive argument. Thus it has been objected that sex-lure distracts attention from study ; the answer to which is that, so far from increasing sex-lure during adolescence, the mixed school decreases it. It has been objected that the differing mental attitudes of the sexes make coeducation difficult ; the reply to which is that the attitudes are complementary rather than incompatible, and therefore give coinstruction a special value. But if it is thought that this is not true of their attitudes towards some one subject, the remedy is simple : separate boys and girls for that subject. And it has been objected that the girl is overshadowed by the more vigorous boy, and does not get a fair chance of developing her own personality ; to which the only real answer is that, in practice, good coeducational schools do not find that this difficulty arises.

There are certain other objections, frequently heard, of which no more need be said than that

they are due to misconceptions of what coeducation means. In this category come such objections as that boys and girls ought not to follow identical curricula, the answer to which is that, in a mixed school, they don't ; or that they do not want always to be together, the answer to which is that, in a mixed school, they are not ; or that boys need a man's hand, the answer to which is that, in a mixed school, they get it. But they also get, to their great advantage, a woman's hand too ; and they need both if their development is to be complete.

There is a further class of objection which is directed rather to abuses of coeducation than to coeducation itself. For example, it is sometimes said that the interests of the girls are sacrificed to those of the boys. This is generally equivalent to an accusation of bias in the Head of the school ; if it is justified in any given case, the remedy is to reform or remove him rather than to condemn the system against the basic principle of which he is sinning. The objection only becomes a valid argument against coeducation if it is coupled with the suggestion that men are inevitably biased in favour of their own sex, and that an impartial Head cannot be found. It is true that most teachers who do work of real value have their own special bias on educational questions, in the sense that their experience leads them to place their stresses in a way peculiar to

themselves ; but this is a different thing from having a marked sex-bias. The type of man (or woman) who cannot avoid a strong sex-bias is not likely to be attracted to the headship of a mixed school. But an unconscious bias is always a possibility ; and to guard against an admitted danger the position and authority of the Senior Assistant should be strengthened. Co-operation and consultation between the Head and the Senior Assistant is the best safeguard against bias. A further safeguard is to keep the numbers of men and women on the staff as nearly equal as is possible, and to a small extent the position is helped by an equality of numbers between boys and girls. In the early days of mixed schools it was common for one sex largely to outnumber the other ; and in any school there is always a risk that the interests of any special class of pupil will be inadequately catered for if the class is too limited in numbers.

To the observer who looks at the school from the outside, this question of bias seems all-important, for he tends to think of the boys and the girls as two sharply contrasted groups. But inside the school the tendency is more and more to think of them as individuals rather than as members of any special group. It would be rash to say that no one inside a mixed school is ever tempted to accuse the Head of bias ; but it would be true to say that he is less often



suspected of a sex-bias than he is of those hundred and one little biases of which the Heads of all schools are sometimes suspected by their colleagues.

It is frequently said that "girls need a Head Mistress." This is perhaps a slogan rather than an argument. It certainly resembles a slogan in two respects ; it begs the whole question at issue, and it is impossible to attach a precise meaning to it, since it may mean different things to different people. Perhaps it may be balanced by another slogan, "Girls need the influence of both men and women." In any case it can form no part of an argument against coeducation when two things are realised : first, that a mixed school can be so organised as to be free from bias ; second, that the adolescent girl in a mixed school gets just as many opportunities as any other girl of coming into contact with older members of her own sex who can give her all the special advice, encouragement and help she needs.

There is one objection, not so far mentioned explicitly in these pages, with which it is impossible not to feel considerable sympathy. Coeducationists lay great stress on the good influence which boys have on girls, and girls on boys ; they minimise, or even omit to mention at all, the possibility that the influence may be a bad one. They assert, for instance, that the

hard-working girl stimulates the boy ; might not the lazier boy bring the girl down to his own level ? If good qualities can be imitated, cannot bad qualities be imitated also ? The obvious answer, and the honest one, is that they can. But the coeducationist can only speak and write from his own experience ; and in actual fact, in a good school, each sex does seem to be more influenced by the good points of the other than by the bad ones. But of course it is an overstatement of the case to say that the influence is wholly and invariably for the good ; the prudent statement, to which most teachers in mixed schools would subscribe, is that the influence is for the good to a much greater extent than for the bad.

Every human being, in every type of school, is always exerting some kind of influence on those with whom he comes into contact. Whether A helps B, or B hinders A, depends to some extent on the personalities of the individuals concerned ; it also depends very largely on the " tone " of the school. And if a mixed school has a bad tone it cannot claim to be exempt from the consequences of a bad tone. But there is this consideration to be borne in mind, that each sex seems to have an instinctive though largely unconscious tendency to appear at its best in the presence of the other ; and this may possibly be one reason why in actual fact boys

and girls do seem to do each other much more good than harm.

Yet the danger of the bad tone is there ; and if it materialises the mixed school will be an unlovely place. There is no reason to suppose that it will be any worse than any other kind of school which has a bad tone ; but its faults will be obvious for all to see, and it will be no advertisement for coeducation. Coeducationists must be content to take the risk. The mixed school deliberately sets out to widen the experience of its members ; it cannot avoid all risks if it is to do that. There are always dangers in the way of any journey, but it is better to travel than to stand still. "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race when that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat." Those who like cloistered virtue will always prefer the single-sex school, in the mistaken belief that it avoids complications. They will always prefer a school which avoids difficulties by becoming as homogeneous as possible—forgetting that in proportion as any community becomes homogeneous so it becomes narrow in its outlook, intolerant, irresponsible to new ideas, and isolated from that larger world which is not homogeneous at all.

A well-known form of the objection that boys

and girls may have a bad effect upon each other is the frequently expressed fear that boys in a mixed school will become effeminate, and girls will become coarsened. This, however, is directly contrary to the actual experience of mixed schools. There is no tendency for the boy to lose the best qualities which go to make up "manliness," or the girl those which make up "womanliness."

The athletic records of mixed schools make one thing clear to begin with: in qualities of pluck and endurance the coeducated boy is in no way behind any other boy. Nor, of course, is there any reason why he should be. For whatever the effect of girls upon boys, it will not be in the direction of making them effeminate. If a boy pays no attention to the opinion in which he is held by a girl, then she is not likely to have a bad effect upon him; if, on the other hand, he does, then he will certainly not become effeminate, for if there is one thing above all others which a girl dislikes, it is a "ladylike" boy. And, similarly, boys do not respect hoydens.

If, therefore, a boy should show signs of effeminacy, the first thing that will happen is that he will be disliked by the girls; the second thing is that his boy friends will tell him about it, with that frankness which is so engaging a feature of boy nature; and the third thing is that the staff will point the matter out to him.

Two of these restraints operate in a boys' school ; the mixed school alone provides all three. There will be small encouragement for the youth in any quarter. He will, of course, be desired at intervals to brush his hair and to wash his hands ; there does not seem to be much harm in that. But he will not be encouraged to spend his pocket-money on scented hairoil, or coloured handkerchiefs, or attractive socks ; and if he should show a tendency to evade football practice, it may safely be left to his House captain to deal with him.

What really are the essential components of manliness ? Are they not strength, vigour, ability to take a hard knock, sometimes even to give one, the courage that makes a boy stand up to fast bowling on a bumpy wicket, the still higher courage that enables him to " greet the unseen with a cheer " ? So far as these qualities go, the coeducated boy has just as many opportunities of developing them as the boy in a boys' school, for they are qualities which girls admire ; and if the girl should be tempted to copy them, so much the better for the girl. But if manliness has to include other qualities ; if it is necessary for the manly boy to be rude, brutal, inconsiderate, intolerant, heedless of other people's points of view or feelings, then it must be admitted that the coeducated boy will have fewer chances of becoming manly than he would

have in a boys' school, for these degenerate forms of manliness will make him unpopular with girls.

Much the same is to be said of the conception of womanliness. The word used to denote the qualities of helplessness, of complete self-effacement, the ability to faint on any and every pretext; in fact, a kind of doormat personality. Boys have little patience with these things, and certainly do not encourage their growth in girls. But womanliness in its best sense really implies the qualities of pity and love, refinement, sympathy, tact, a certain reserve; and these qualities the boy does admire. And if he goes further than admiring them in girls, and tries to imitate them for himself, he may surely be allowed to do so without incurring the charge of effeminacy.

The opposite suggestion has been made, that the mixed school makes boys more virile and girls more womanly. Each sex sees where its advantage lies and concentrates on its strong points. It is an interesting theory, and it has this at least in its favour, that it is in closer correspondence with observed facts than the theory that mixed schools produce hoydens.

A great number of minor objections to coeducation are due to prejudice alone. Coeducation is an idea with which many people

are unfamiliar ; and they do not like the pain of a new idea. No one, of course, avows that his objection is due to prejudice ; he says that it arises from an instinct which is deep-rooted in human nature, and he casts around for a biological argument to show how right he is. And his opposition does arise from a deep-rooted instinct ; but it is not the instinct he takes it to be. Such opponents snatch at any objection which comes handy ; sometimes they snatch at contradictory ones. Thus the same man who objects that coeducation makes boys effeminate will often be found a little later arguing that mistresses cannot control boys, and that boys in a mixed school are therefore ill-disciplined and rough.

It is a waste of time to enumerate all the objections which obviously arise from prejudice alone. One opponent has complained that boys will not respect a woman who "walks behind the bowler's arm" ; another that there can be no real loyalty in a mixed school ; another has asked what a mere Head Master could do "with a girl who came to school with a painted and powdered face." As there are in most mixed schools half a dozen girl prefects, several women teachers and a Senior Mistress, it is just conceivable that they might between them contrive to deal with the matter without dragging the unfortunate man into the business at all. And if they all

failed to notice the offence, and it really required the specially sensitive eye and nose of a Head Master to detect it, it is still possible that he could, without great loss of self-respect, suggest to his Senior Mistress that someone might put in a little work with a scrubbing brush.

Prejudice will sometimes result in objections which really apply to all types of school. For example, it is sometimes said that Head Masters cannot supervise cookery lessons. It is a curious example to choose, since the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and there is a certain test which even male teachers can apply to the products of the cookery class. Some of them apply it regularly. The truth is that there are always some subjects in every curriculum of which the Head of a school cannot himself claim a specialist knowledge. He is able to apply certain tests of the efficiency of the teaching, but he cannot criticise the technical details. For such matters he has to rely on his heads of departments. Are all Head Mistresses able to supervise advanced work in Classics, Modern Languages and in Science? Can the Head Masters of boys' schools do it? One well-known boys' school has a curriculum which includes Divinity, English Essay and Literature, History, Geography, Latin, Greek, French, German, Spanish, Mathematics, Mechanics, Music, Art, Woodwork, Metalwork, Shorthand and Bookkeeping, Physics, Chemistry,



Botany, Zoology, Agricultural Chemistry, Engineering Drawing and Design, and a curious (but apparently fascinating) subject called "Heat Engines." The educational menu, by the way, is *à la carte* rather than *table d'hôte*. Perhaps it was of the Head of this school that the poet wrote :

The more they gazed, the more the wonder grew  
That one small head should carry all he knew.

Some objections are inspired by what are purely professional reasons. For there is professional opposition to coeducation on the part of both men and women. Reference has already been made to the fear of some men teachers that the growth of mixed schools may eventually deprive them of their livelihood. Some women teachers have a corresponding fear that under a coeducational system they will be unable to secure their fair share of responsible positions. The claims of women, they think, do not receive due recognition in mixed schools.

This professional opposition is easily understandable. Men have nominally opened profession after profession to women, but actually they have taken care to reserve the best positions for themselves ; only a small proportion fall to women. It hardly matters to the argument whether men have deliberately taken the best

positions or whether they have been forced to take them by the pressure of public opinion ; the result, from the woman's point of view, is the same. This is true of the medical profession, the Civil Service and almost every branch of activity in which men and women share. And it is certainly true of the educational profession. The Board of Education is staffed almost entirely, in its higher branches, by men ; there is a very small proportion of women Inspectors ; Directors of Education are invariably men ; Heads of mixed post-primary schools are almost always men. Girls' schools represent the one corner of the educational field in which women have been able to secure the key positions for their own sex. Is it any wonder that they are reluctant to give them up ? While it is thought that the education of girls is solely a woman's affair, instead of being, as it really is, a matter which concerns us all, women can retain their positions of authority in the one sphere in which they have really a preponderating influence. And if they are asked to give up some share of the control of girls, in return for their admission to some share in the control of boys, they can reply that what is really demanded of them is that they shall give up positions of real authority in return for others which are too often of very limited responsibility only.

If women care to draw up an indictment

of this kind, there is really no answer to it which it would not be impertinent and hypocritical for a man to give. The most that a man can do is to reply that the indictment is a little overdrawn ; to point out that the position is, after all, gradually changing ; that women heads of mixed elementary schools are now numerous ; that the woman head of department in the secondary school has been common for years ; that the Senior Mistress holds a position of real authority ; that women heads of secondary schools are on the way. These are palliations merely ; so far as a direct reply to the charge goes there is little that a man can say. Some men, indeed, take refuge behind the argument that teaching is a man's life work, while for women it is only the occupation of a few years preliminary to marriage, when it will be abandoned. But there is no substance in this, since no one expects or wants the woman who remains in the profession for a few years only to rise to positions of great responsibility ; and for other women teaching is their life work just as it is with men.

But, although it does not lie with men to criticise this attitude, there are signs that the best women teachers are themselves condemning it, and are urging instead that the good of the children must be the first consideration ; that schools exist for boys and girls rather than for teachers ; and that if coeducation is good for

boys and girls, no merely professional questions can be allowed to block the way.

Women of the best type are being attracted to mixed schools in increasing numbers, and the work that they are doing in these schools is making it less and less possible for their claims to be overlooked. They will obtain their full share of influence and responsibility in mixed schools, not by standing aloof from them, but by making their work in them triumphantly successful.

There is one final objection to coeducation ; and it is the fundamental one. It comes from those who believe in a superior sex (their own) and an inferior sex (the opposite one). The man (or woman) "loses caste" by working under, or even on terms of equality with, members of the opposite sex. The mixed school stands for sex-equality, in the sense of equality of status and equality of opportunity ; and those who do not believe in equality of status cannot support a type of school which is based upon it. That is a real and ultimate difference, which no purely educational argument can resolve ; it is the final dividing line between the coeducationist and his opponent.

If the reader really feels that his sex (or her sex) is the superior one, then he will oppose coeducation by all means in his power ; and he must derive such inspiration as he can, in opposing it,

from the ideal of a community separated into upper and lower strata, with the consequent unending struggle for the higher place. But if he feels that this kind of vision is not an ideal at all, but an elementary and barbarous state out of which mankind ought to emerge, then he must ask himself whether a better ideal can ever materialise except through the agency of coeducation. And unless he can find an alternative, coeducation for him will then become a practical question of ways and means ; and though he may judge all coeducational institutions at present existing to be failures, and unworthy of his support, he will constantly be seeking how to improve them : he will work for the school of the future even if he cannot support the school of to-day. But his first step will be to discover what the mixed schools of to-day are really doing. He will not be content to read books about them, but he will obtain knowledge of them at first hand. He will go and see them ; and he will not be content to see one or two, but he will see as many as possible, so that he may judge whether any defects he sees (he will see plenty) are really inseparable from coeducation, or whether they are due to some quite different cause - which is unconnected with it, and which might equally have produced failure in a single-sex school. If he is a teacher, he will try to get an opportunity of teaching in a mixed school for a year or two,

so that again he may judge for himself. He will in this way be able to arrive at an opinion of real value, and will be in a position to offer informed and well-founded criticism. This book has been written in the belief that if the reader will really do these things, he is likely to be converted from a supporter of coeducation in theory to a supporter of the actual work now being done in England, and for England, by its coeducational schools.



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